Apples of Gold

FOR

Young men and Women:

AND

A CROWN of GLORY for Old Men and Women.

OR,

The happiness of being good betimes, And the honour of being an Old Disciple.

Clearly and fully discovered, and closely and faithfully applyed.

ALSO

The Young mans Objections answered, And the Old Mans Doubts resolved.

By *THOMAS BROOKS* heretofore Preacher of the Gospel at St. *Margarets* New *Fish-Street-hill.*

The Twelfth Edition.

But I thy Servant fear the Lord from my youth, 1 Kings 18. 12.

The hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness, Prov. 16. 31.

London, Printed for *John Hancock*, and are to be sold at the three *Bibles*, being the first Shop in *Popes-Head* Alley, next to *Cornhil*, 1676.

TO

All Young Persons throughout the Nation, especially those (of both Sexes) who begin to turn their faces towards

ZION.

Dear Hearts,

A *Word spoken in due season, how good is it! it is often like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver; many times such a word is sweet, pretious, pleasing and delectable, and strong in its operation.*

A company of near friends Dining together one Sabbath day, one that was at Table (to prevent impertinent discourse) said, that it was a question whether they should all go to Heaven or no, which struck them all into a dump, and caused every one to enter

Prov. 15. 23, 25, 10, 11. A word spoken (*gnalogh-nan*) upon his wheel, that is, with a due concurrence, and observation of all circumstances of time, place, person, all which are as the wheels upon which our words and speeches should run: such a word is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver.

enter into a ſerious conſideration with themſelves, one thought if any of this company go to Hell it muſt be I, and ſo thought another, and another, and indeed ſo thought almoſt every one then preſent, as well ſervants that waited as thoſe that ſat at the table, as it was afterwards acknowledg'd, and (through the mercy and bleſſing of God) this ſpeech ſo wrought upon the ſpirits of moſt of them, that it proved the firſt inſtrumental means of their converſion.

I have my hopes through grace, that this Treatiſe, though it be ſown in weakneſs, yet by the bleſſing of the moſt High upon it, it may riſe in power, and be an inſtrumental means of the winning of ſouls to Chriſt, which is my higheſt ambition in this world, and therefore I have broke thorow all difficulties, and carnal reaſonings, that might otherwiſe have ſtifled this Babe in the Womb, and kept it from ever ſeeing of the light.

I have read of an Emperor, that delighted in no undertakings ſo much, as thoſe which in the eſteem of his Coun-

Counſellours and Captains were deemed moſt difficult and impoſſible, if they ſaid ſuch or ſuch an enterprize would never be accompliſhed, it was Argument enough to him, to make the adventure, and he uſually proſpered, he ſeldom miſcarried.

I have never found greater and choicer bleſſings to attend any of my poor weak labours, than thoſe that have been brought forth into the world through the greateſt ſtraits and difficulties.

Valerius Maximus *reports, that one telling a Souldier, going to War againſt the* Perſians, *that they would hide the Sun with their Arrows, he anſwered, we ſhall fight beſt in the ſhade; nothing ſhould diſcourage nor diſhearten a ſouldier of Chriſt,* 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. *Chriſt ſaith to all his Souldiers (as the black Prince his Father ſaid to him fighting as it were in blood to the knees, and in great diſtreſs) Either vanquiſh or die. Men of no reſolution, or of weak reſolution, will be but little ſerviceable to the good of ſouls; ſuch watchmen as will be free*

Valerius Maximus lib. 2. c. de Fiducia.

Hiſt. of *France*, p. 196.

from the blood of ſouls, and be ſerviceable to the intereſt of Chriſt in turning ſinners from darkneſs to light, muſt be men of ſpirit and reſolution.

Auguſt. de tempore Serm. 256.

I remember St. Auſtin *beginneth one of his Sermons thus* (Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes, flos ætatis, periculum mentis) *To you is my ſpeech, O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the mind.*

So ſay I, To you, O young men, do I dedicate the enſuing Treatiſe, & that firſt becauſe the matter contained therein doth primarily and eminently concern you.

And ſecondly, becauſe of an earneſt deſire that I have of your internal and eternal well-fare.

And thirdly, becauſe there is moſt hope of doing good among you (as I evidence more at large in the following Treatiſe.)

And fourthly, To countermine the great underminer of your ſouls, whoſe great deſign is to poyſon you & to poſſeſs you in the morning of your daies.

Fifthly, to provoke others that are more able & worthy, to be more ſerviceable to you in declaring themſelves fully

fully on this very ſubject; which none yet have done that I know of, though it be a point of as great concernment to young perſons (eſpecially) as any I know in all the Scriptures.

Sixthly, & laſtly, becauſe there are very many that lie in wait to deceive, corrupt and poyſon your perſons, with God-diſhonouring, Chriſt-denying, Conſcience-waſting, & Soul-damning opinions, principles, & blaſphemies.

Eph. 4. 14. A blind eye is worſe than a lame foot, he that had the Leproſie in his head, was to be pronounced utterly unclean.

I have read of one who boaſted & gloried in this, that he had ſpent thirty years in corrupting and poyſoning of youth; doubtleſs many wretches, many Monſters, there be amongſt us, whomake it their buſineſs, their glory, their all to delude and draw young perſons to thoſe dangerous errors, & blaſphemies that lead to deſtruction. Errour and folly (ſaith one very well) be the knots of Satan, wherewith he ties Children to the ſtake to be burnt in Hell.

There is a truth in what the Tragedian *ſaid long ſince* (Venenum in auro bibitur) *poyſon is commonly drunk out of a cup of gold; So is an error*

or by-notion ſooneſt taken into the Judgement and conſcience from perſons of the faireſt carriage, & ſmootheſt converſations. Error is ſo foul an Hag, that if it ſhould come in its own ſhape, a man would loath it, and flie from it, as from Hell. If Jezebel *had not painted her face, ſhe had not gotten ſo many young doting Adulterers to have followed her to their own ruine.*

Ah! Young men, young men, the bleſſing of the Lord upon your ſerious and diligent peruſal of this Treatiſe may be a happy means to preſerve you from being enſnared and deluded by
Mat. 23. 15 *thoſe Monſters, who compaſs Sea and Land to make Proſelytes for Hell.*

And thus I have given you the reaſons of my dedicating this Treatiſe to the ſervice of your ſouls; I would willingly preſume, that it will be as kindly taken, as it is cordially tendered; I hope none of you into whoſe hands it may fall, will ſay as once Antipater *King of* Macedonia *did, when one preſented him with a Book treating of happineſs, his anſwer was* (Ou Scholazo) *I have no leiſure.* *Ah!*

Ah! Young men and women, young men & virgins, as you tender the everlasting welfare of your souls, as you would escape Hell and come to Heaven, as you would have an interest in Christ, a pardon in your bosoms, as you would be blessed here, & glorious hereafter, find time, find leisure to read over and over the following Treatise which is purposely calculated for your eternal good. But before I go further, I think it needful in some respects, to give the world some further account of other reasons or motives, that have prevailed with me to appear once more in Print, which are these:

First, having preached a Sermon occasionally upon those words (on which this following discourse is built) I was earnestly importuned to Print the Sermon by some worthy friends; I did as long as in modesty I could withstand their desires, judging it not worthy of them: but being at last overcome, and setting about the work, the breathings and comings in of God were such, as hath occasioned

that one Sermon, to multiply into many. Luther *tells us, that when he firſt began to turn his back upon Popery, he intended no more, but to withſtand Popiſh Pardons, and ſelling Indulgencies; yet neither would God or his enemies let him alone, till he reſolved with* Moſes, *not to leave a hoof of Popery unoppoſed, &c. God many times in the things of the Goſpel carries forth his ſervants beyond their intentions, beyond their reſolution. But*

Secondly, the kind acceptance and good quarter that my other pieces have found in the world, and thoſe ſignal multiplyed bleſſings that have followed them, to the winning of many over to Chriſt, & to the building up of others in Chriſt, hath encouraged me to preſent this Treatiſe to the world, hoping that the Lord hath a bleſſing in ſtore for this alſo.

Thirdly, that I might in ſome meaſure make up others neglects, whoſe Age, whoſe Parts, whoſe Experiences, whoſe Graces have long called upon them to do ſomething conſiderable in this

this way, & that they may be provoked by my weak essay to do better, and to make up what is wanting through my invincible infirmities, & spiritual wants and weaknesses, which are so many, as may well make a sufficient Apology for all the defects & weaknesses that in this Treatise shall appear to a serious judicious eye. But,

Fourthly, The love of Christ and souls hath constrained me to it; *as there is an attractive, so there is a compulsive virtue in Divine love. Love to Christ & souls, will make a man willing to spend and be spent*; *he that prays himself to death, that preaches himself to death, that studies himself to death, that sweats himself to death, for the honour of Christ, & good of souls, shall be no loser in the end. Divine love is like a Rod of Myrtle, which, as* Pliny *reports, makes the Traveller that carries it in his hand, that he shall never be faint nor weary: Divine love is very operative,* (si non operatur, non est) *if it do not work, it is an argument, it is not at all. Divine Love, like fire,*

2 Cor. 5. 14.
2 Cor. 12. 15.

Solus amor nescit difficultates, Love knows no difficulties.

fire, it is not idle, but active, he that loves cannot be barren; Love will make the soul constant, and abundant in well-doing. God admits none to Heaven (saith Justin Martyr) *but such as can perswade him by their works, that they love him. The very Heathen hath observed that God doth not love his children with a weak womanish affection, but with a strong masculine love; and certainly, they that love the Lord strongly, that love him with a masculine love, they cannot but lay out their little all for him, and his glory. But,*

Seneca.

Fifthly, I observe that Satan and his instruments are exceeding busie and unwearied in their designs, attempts, and endeavours, in these daies, to corrupt, and poison, to defile and destroy, the young, the tender, the most hopeful, and most flourishing plants among us.

It is said of *Marcellus* the *Roman* General, that he could not be quiet, *Nec Victor nec victus*, neither Conquered, nor Conqueror; Such a one is Satan.

Latimer *told the Clergy in his time, that if they would not learn diligence, and vigilance of the Prophets and Apostles, they should learn it of the Devil, who goes up and down his Di-*

aceſs,

ceſs, and acts by an untired power, ſeeking whom he may deſtroy; when the Wolves are abroad, the ſhepherd ſhould not ſleep, but watch, yea double his watch, remembring that he were better have all the blood of all the men in the world upon him, than the blood of one ſoul upon him, by his negligence, or otherwiſe.

Satan is a Lyon, not a Lamb, a roaring Lyon, not a ſleepy Lyon, not a Lyon ſtanding ſtill, but a Lyon going up and down, as not being contented with the prey the many millions of ſouls he hath got, he ſeeks whom he may ſip up at a draught, as that word (καταπίω) in the 1 Pet. 5. 8. *imports, his greateſt deſign is to fill Hell with ſouls, which ſhould awaken every one to be active, and to do all that may be done to prevent his deſign, and help forward the ſalvation of ſouls.*

St. Chryſoſtom *compares good Paſtors to Fountains that ever ſend forth waters, or Conduits that are alwaies running, though no Pail be put under. But,* *Chryſ. in Mat. Ho.* 15.

Sixth-

Sixthly and lastly, I know the whole life of man is but an hour to work in; and the more work any man doth for Christ on earth, the better pay he shall have when he comes to Heaven. Every man shall at the last reap as he sows. Opportunities of doing service for Christ and souls are more worth than a world; therefore I was willing to take hold on this, not knowing how soon I may put off this earthly tabernacle, and remembring that as there is no believing, nor repenting in the Grave, so there is no praying, preaching, writing, nor Printing in the Grave, we had need to be up and doing, to put both hands to it, and to do all we do with all our might, knowing, that the night draws on upon us wherein no man can work.

1 Cor. 15. ult.

2 Cor. 9. 6.

2 Pet. 1. 13, 14.

Eccl. 9. 10.

Joh. 9. 4.

A Christians dying day, is the Lords pay-day, that is a time to receive wages, not to do work. And thus I have given the world a true account of the Reasons that moved me to Print the following discourse.

There are many things in this Trea-

Treatise that are of use to all, and several things of moment, that are not every day preached nor read. I have made it as pleasurable as time would permit, that so it might be the more profitable to the Reader, and that I might the better take the young man by (a holy) craft, which is a high point of Heavenly wisdom, there being no wisdom to that of winning of souls. I shall now follow this poor piece with my weak prayer, that it may be so blest from Heaven, as that it may bring in some, and build up others, and do good to all; And so rest,

1 Cor. 12. ch. 15. 2. Prov. 11. 30.

Your Friend and Servant in the Gospel of Christ,

THOMAS BROOKS.

THE

It was awis saying of
a lord when asked to drink
the kings helth i will praie
for the kings helth and drink
for mine owne
i will be glad and reioyce in
thy merey for thou hast considered
my troubel thou hast known my
sowl in adversities it was
a grat comfort to david that
god knewe all his adversitis and
considered all his troubls the lord
knoweth who ar his who they ar
that put ther trust in him and make
god there refuge he can coll them
ewery on by ther names so that ther
is no danger that any of his shold
perish throw amistake in tims of confusion
when he is sending his iudgments upon
wicked men Jeasus crist yester day
and to day and for ever more
the same god

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1 *If you would be good betimes, then you must labour to be acquainted with four things betimes, as*

1 *You*

1 *You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scriptures betimes.* *from* 207 *to* 219

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4 *If you would be good betimes, then*

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5 *If*

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THE

THE
Young Mans Duty
AND
EXCELLENCY.

1 Kings 14. ch. 13. v.

And all Iſrael ſhall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam ſhall come to the Grave, becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing toward the Lord God of Iſrael, in the houſe of Jeroboam.

I Shall only ſtand upon the latter part of this Verſe, becauſe that affords me matter moſt ſuitable to my deſign.

——*Becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing towards the*

Lord God of Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

These words are a commendation of *Abijah's* life; *In him was found some good thing towards the Lord, &c.* When *Abijah* was a Child, *verse* 3. 12. when he was in his young and tender years, he had the seeds of grace in him, he had the Image of God upon him, he could discern between good and evil, and he did that which pleased the Lord.

The Hebrew word (*Nagnar*) translated Child, *verse* 3. is very often applyed to such as we call Youths, or young men, *Exod.* 24.5. *Numb.* 6. 11. 1 *Sam.* 2. 17. *&c.*

Of such age and prudence was *Abijah*, as that he could chuse good and refuse evil, he was a *Lot* in *Sodom*, he was good among the bad, the bent and frame of his heart was towards that which was good; when the heart both of his Father and Mother was set upon evil.

נער 'Tis used for a young man or stripling. Gen. 22.5. and often for a servant, though he be a man of ripe years, Est. 2. 2. Such as one Evangelist calleth young men, Luke 12.45. another calleth fellow servants. Mat. 5. 29.

Abi-

Abijah began to be good betimes, he croſt that peſtilent Proverb, a young Saint, and an old Devil. 'Tis the Glory and goodneſs of God, that he will take notice of the leaſt good that is in any of his. 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. There was but one good word in *Sarah*'s ſpeech to *Abraham*, and that was this, ſhe called him *Lord*, and this, God mentions for her honour and commendation, *ſhe called him Lord*: God looks more upon one grain of wheat, than upon a heap of Chaff; upon one ſhining Pearl, than upon an heap of rubbiſh. God finds a Pearl in *Abijah*, and he puts it into his Crown, to his eternal commendation. *There was found in him ſome good thing towards the Lord*, &c. For the words,

There was found in him. The Hebrew word *Matſa*, ſometimes ſignifies, finding without ſeeking, *Iſa.* 65. 1. *I am found of them that ſought me not*: ſo *Pſal* 116. *verſe* 3. *The ſorrows of Death compaſſed me*,

and the pains of Hell got hold upon me, I found trouble and ſorrow. I found trouble which I look'd not for, I was not ſearching after ſorrow, but I found it. There's an elegancy in the Original. The pains of Hell gat hold upon me; So we read, but the Hebrew is, The pains of Hell found me (one word ſignifies both) they found me, I did not find them. *There was found in Abijah ſome good thing towards the Lord, i. e.* there was found in him without ſearching or ſeeking, ſome good thing towards the Lord; it was plain and viſible enough, men might ſee and obſerve it without enquiring, or ſeeking, they might run and read ſome good thing in him towards the Lord.

Secondly, The word ſometime ſignifies, finding by ſeeking, or inquiry, *Iſa.* 55. 6. *Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found,* &c. So upon ſearch and inquiry, there was found in *Abijah* (though young) ſome good thing towards the Lord.

Third-

Thirdly, ſometimes the Word notes the obtaining of that which is ſufficient, *Joſh.* 7. 16. *Numb.* 11. 22. *Judg.* 21. 14. in *Abijah* there was that good in him towards the Lord, that was ſufficient to evidence the work of Grace upon him, ſufficient to ſatisfie himſelf and others, of the goodneſs and happineſs of his condition, though he died in the prime, and flower of his days, *&c.*

And in him was found ſome good thing; The Hebrew word (*Tob*) that is here rendered *good*, ſignifies,

Firſt, That which is right and juſt, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. See thy matters are good and right, *i. e.* juſt and right.

Secondly, That which is profitable, *Deut.* 6. 11. *Houſes of all good things*, *i. e.* houſes full of all profitable things.

Thirdly, That which is pleaſing, 2 *Sam.* 19. 27. *Do what is good in thine eyes*, *i. e.* do what is pleaſing in thine eyes.

Fourthly, that which is full, and compleat, *Gen.* 15.15. *Thou ſhalt be buried in a good old age, i. e.* thou ſhalt be buried when thine age is full and compleat.

Fifthly, That which is joyful and delightful, 1 *Sam.* 25.8. *We come in a good day, i. e.* we come in a joyful and delightful day: now put all together, and you may ſee that there was found in *Abijah*, when he was young, that which was right and juſt, that which was pleaſing and profitable, and that which was matter of joy and delight.

In the words you have two things that are moſt conſiderable.

Firſt, That this Young mans goodneſs was towards the Lord God of *Iſrael*; many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who are yet bad, yea, very bad towards God. Some there are, who are very kind to the creature, and yet very unkind to their Creator, many mens goodneſs

This age affords many ſuch hypocrites, ſuch Monſters, *&c.*

neſs towards the creature, is like the riſing Sun; but their goodneſs towards the Lord, is like a morning Cloud, or as the early dew, which is ſoon dryed up by the Sun-beams, but *Abijah*'s goodneſs was towards the Lord, his goodneſs faced the Lord, it looked towards the glory of God. Two things make a good Chriſtian, good actions, and good aims, and though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, (as in *Uzzi*) yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, (as in *Jehu*) whoſe juſtice was approved, but his policy puniſhed; the firſt Chapter of *Hoſea*, and the fourth Verſe; doubtleſs *Abijah*'s actions were good, and his aims good; and this was indeed his glory, that his goodneſs was towards the Lord.

Hoſ. 6. 4.

There may be *Malum opus in Bonâ materiâ*, as in *Jehu*'s Zeal.

It's recorded of the *Catanenſes*, that they made a ſtately Monument of Kingly Magnificence, in remembrance of two Sons, who took their aged Parents upon

their backs, and carryed them through the fire, when their Fathers houſe was all in a flame; theſe Young men were good towards their Parents; but what is this to *Abijah's goodneſs towards the Lord?* &c. A man cannot be good towards the Lord, but he will be good towards others; but a man may be good towards others, that is not good towards the Lord: Oh that mens practiſes did not give too loud a Teſtimony every day to this Aſſertion! *&c.*

Happy are thoſe ſouls that with the Sturgeon or Crab-fiſh can ſwim againſt the ſtream of cuſtom and example and that with *Atticus*, can cleave to the right though loſing ſide.

Secondly, He was good among the bad, *He was good in the houſe of Jeroboam*; 'Tis in faſhion to ſeem (at leaſt) to be good among the good, but to be really good among thoſe that are bad, that are eminently bad, argues not only a truth of goodneſs, but a great degree of goodneſs; this young man was good, *in the houſe of Jeroboam, who made all Iſrael to ſin*, who was naught, who was very naught, who was ſtark naught; and yet

Abijah

Abijah, as the Fiſhes which live in the Salt-Sea are freſh; ſo though he lived in a (ſink) ſea of wickedneſs, yet he retained his *Goodneſs towards the Lord.*

They ſay, Roſes grow the ſweeter, when they are planted by Garlick: they are ſweet and rare Chriſtians indeed, who hold their goodneſs, and grow in goodneſs, where wickedneſs ſits on the Throne; and ſuch a one the young man in the Text was.

To be Wheat among Tares, Corn among Chaff, Pearls among Cockles, and Roſes among Thorns is excellent.

To be a *Jonathan* in *Saul*'s Court, *to be an Obadiah* in *Ahab*'s Court, to be an *Obedmelech* in *Zedekiah*'s Court, and to be an *Abijah* in *Jeroboam*'s Court, is a wonder, a miracle.

To be a *Lot* in *Sodom*, to be an *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, to be a *Daniel* in *Babylon*, to be a *Nehemia* in *Damaſco*, and to be a *Job* in the Land of *Uz*, is to be a Saint among

among Devils, and ſuch a one the man in the Text was.

The Poets affirm, that *Venus* never appeared ſo beauteous, as when ſhe ſate by black *Vulcan*'s ſide. Gracious ſouls ſhine moſt clear, when they be ſet by black conditioned perſons; *Stephen*'s face never ſhin'd ſo Angelically, ſo gloriouſly (in the Church) where all were vertuous, as before the Council, where all were vicious and malicious. So *Abijah* was a bright Star, a ſhining Sun in *Jeroboam*'s Court, which for prophaneneſs and wickedneſs, was a very Hell.

The words which I have choſen to inſiſt upon, afford us ſeveral Obſervations, but I ſhall only name one, which I intend to proſecute at this time, and that is this, *viz.*

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to be really good betimes.

OTher Scriptures speak out this to be a truth, besides what you have in the Text to confirm it, as that of the second of *Chronicles*, Chapter 34. 1, 2, 3. Verses. *Josiah* was eight years old when he began to Reign, and he reigned in *Jerusalem* one and thirty years, and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of *David* his Father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left; For in the eighth year of his Reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of *David* his Father: And in the twelfth year, he began to purge *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, from the High-places, and the Groves and the Carved Images, and the molten Images. 'Twas *Obadiah*'s honour, that he feared the Lord from his

Job 32. 4, 5, 6, 7.

his youth : And *Timothy*'s Crown, that he knew the Scriptures, from a Child ; and St. *John*'s Joy, that he found Children walking in the truth; this revived his good old heart, and made it dance for joy in his bosom. To spend further time in the proving of this truth, would be but to light Candles, to see the Sun at noon.

1 King. 18. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 15. 2 Epist. vers. 4.

The grounds and reasons of this point, *viz.*

That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to be really good betimes ; are these that follow,

Deut. 6. 5. ch. 11. 13. *Augustine* beginneth one of his Sermons thus (*ad vos mihi Sermo, O Juvenes, flos ætatis, periculum mentis.* Aug. de temp. Ser. 156. To you is my speech, O young men! the flower of age, the danger of the mind)

Reason I.

First, Because the Lord Commands it ; and Divine Commands are not to be disputed, but obeyed. In the 12. Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, and the 1. Verse, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil day comes not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them :* Remember now, I say, now : now is an atome, will puzzle the wisdom of a Philosopher,

ſopher, the skill of an Angel to divide: Now is a Monoſyllable in all learned Languages.

Remember now thy Creator: Remember him preſently, inſtantly, for thou doſt not know what a day, what an hour may bring forth; thou canſt not tell what deadly ſin, what deadly temptation, what deadly judgment, may overtake thee; if thou doſt not now, even now *Remember thy Creator.*

Remember now thy Creator: Remember to know him, remember to love him, remember to deſire him, remember to delight in him, remember to depend upon him, remember to get an Intereſt in him, remember to live to him, and remember to walk with him. *Remember now thy Creator*; the Hebrew is *Creators*, Father, Son, and Spirit. To the making of man, a Council was called in Heaven, in the firſt of *Geneſis*, and 26. verſe, *Remember thy Creators*, Remember the Father, ſo as to know him, ſo as to be inwardly acquainted with him. Remember the Son,

Son, ſo as to believe in him, ſo as to reſt upon him, ſo as to embrace him, and ſo as to make a compleat reſignation of thy ſelf to him. Remember the Spirit, ſo as to hear his voice, ſo as to obey his voice, ſo as to feel his preſence, and ſo as to experience his influence, *&c.*

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth; he doth not ſay in the time of thy youth, but *in the days of thy youth*; to note that our life is but as a few daies; it is but a vapour, a ſpan, a flower, a ſhadow, a dream: and therefore *Seneca* ſaith well, *that though death be before the old mans face, yet he may be as near the youngs mans back*, &c.

Aug. l. 1. Confeſſ.

Mans life is the ſhadow of ſmoak, the dream of a ſhadow; one doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death.

Ah! Young men, God commands you to be good betimes. Remember, Young men, that it is a dangerous thing to neglect one of his Commands, who by another is able to command you into

into nothing or into Hell. To act or run croſs to Gods expreſs Command (though under pretence of Revelation from God) is as much as a mans life is worth, as you may ſee in that ſad ſtory, 1 *King.* 13. *verſe* 24, &c.

Let young men put all their carnal Reaſons, though never ſo many and weighty, into one Scale, and Gods abſolute Command into the other, and then write *Tekel* upon all their reaſons; they are weighed in the Balance, and found too light.

Ah Sirs! What God commands muſt be put in ſpeedy execution, without denying, or delaying, or diſputing the difficulties that attend it. Moſt Young Men in theſe daies, do as the Heathens, when their Gods called for a Man, they offered a Candle; or as *Hercules* offered up a painted man inſtead of a living. When God calls upon Young men to ſerve him with the Primroſe of their youth, they uſually put him off till

Obedientia non diſcutit Dei mandata, ſed facit. Proſper.

till they are overtaken with trembling joynts, dazled eyes, fainting hearts, failing hands and feeble knees, but there will be bitterneſs in the end, *&c.*

Young men muſt be really good betimes.

Reaſon II.

Becauſe they have means and opportunities of being good betimes.

Never had men better means, and greater opportunies of being good, of doing good, and of receiving good, than now. Ah Lord! how knowing, how believing, how Holy, how Heavenly, how Humble might young men be, were they not wanting to their own ſouls? Young men might be good, very good, yea, eminently good, would they but improve the means of Grace, the tenders of Mercy, and the knockings of Chriſt by his Word, Works, and Spirit.

Eraſmus. The Antients painted Opportunity with a hairy forehead, but bald behind, to ſignifie, that while a man hath Opportunity before him,

him, he may lay hold on it, but if he ſuffer it to ſlip away, he cannot pull it back again.

How many young men are now in everlaſting Chains, who would give ten thouſand worlds, (had they ſo many in their hands to give) to enjoy but an opportunity to hear one Sermon more, to make one Prayer more, to keep one Sabbath more, but cannot? This is the Hell their Torment, this is the Scorpion that is ſtill biting, this is the Worm that is alwaies gnawing. Woe, woe to us, that we have neglected, and trifled away thoſe golden opportunities, that once we had to get our ſins pardoned, our natures changed, our hearts bettered, our Conſciences purged, and our ſouls ſaved, *&c.* * I have read of a King, who having no Iſſue to ſucceed him, eſpying one day a well favoured youth, took him to Court, and committed him to Tutors, to inſtruct him, providing by his Will, that if he proved

* *Bellarm. in concione de cruciatibus Gehennæ.*

ed fit for Government, he ſhould be Crowed King, if not, he ſhould be bound in Chains, and made a Gally-Slave. Now when he grew to years, the Kings Executors perceiving that he had ſadly neglected thoſe means and opportunities, whereby he might have been fit for State-Government, called him before them, and declared the Kings Will and pleaſure concerning him, which was accordingly performed; for they cauſed him to be fettered, and committed to the Gallies. Now what tongue can expreſs how much he was affected and afflicted with his ſad and miſerable eſtate, eſpecially when he conſidered with himſelf that now he is chained, who might have walked at liberty; Now he is a Slave, who might have been a King; Now he is over-ruled by Turks, who might once have ruled over Chriſtians? The Application is eaſie.

Ah!

Ah! young men, young men, ſhall Satan take all opportunities to tempt you? ſhall the World take all opportunities to allure you? ſhall wicked men take all opportunities to inſnare you, and to undo you? and ſhall Chriſtian friends take all opportunities to better you? and ſhall Gods faithful Meſſengers take all opportunities to ſave you? and will you, *will you neglect ſo great ſalvation? Plutarch* writes of *Hannibal*, that when he could have taken *Rome*, he would not; and when he would have taken *Rome*, he could not. Many in their youthful daies, when they might have Mercy, Chriſt, Pardon, Heaven, they will not; and in old age, when they would have Chriſt, Pardon, Peace, Heaven, they cannot, they may not. God ſeems to ſay, as *Theſeus* ſaid once; Go, ſaies he, and tell *Creon*, *Theſeus* offers thee a gracious offer, yet I am pleaſed to be friends, if thou wilt ſubmit (this is my firſt meſ-

'Tis ſtori'd of *Charles*, King of *Sicily*, and *Jeruſalem*, that he was call'ed *Carolus Cunctor*, *Charles* the lingerer; this age affords many ſuch lingerers, &c.

meſſage) but if this offer prevail not, look for me to be up in Arms.

Reaſon III.

Why young men ſhould be really good betimes. Lord, ſaith *Auſtin*, I have loved thee late, the greater was his ſin, and the more were his ſorrows.

Becauſe then they have fewer and leſſer ſins to anſwer, and repent of, multitudes of ſins and ſorrows are prevented by being good betimes.

The more we number our days, the fewer ſins we ſhall have to number. As a Copy is then ſafeſt from blotting, when duſt is put upon it; ſo are we from ſinning, when (in the time of our youth) we remember that we are but duſt. The tears of young penitents do more ſcorch the Devils, than all the flames of Hell, for hereby all their hopes are blaſted, and the great underminer countermined, and blown up. *Mane* is the Devils Verb, he bids tarry, time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, and he bids Repent early, in the morning of thy youth; for then thy ſins will be fewer,

fewer, and leſſer. Well, Young men, remember this, He that will not at the firſt hand buy good Counſel cheap, ſhall at the ſecond hand buy repentance over dear.

Ah! Young men, Young men, if you do not begin to be good betimes, thoſe ſins that are now as Jewels ſparkling in your eyes, will at laſt be Milſtones about your necks, to ſink you for ever.

Pſal. 25. 7. Job 13. 26. There is nothing puts a more ſerious frame into a mans ſpirit, than ot know the worth of his time.

——— Among many things that *Beza* in his laſt Will and Teſtament, gave God thanks for, this was the firſt and chief, that he at the age of ſixteen years, had called him to the knowledge of the truth, and ſo prevented many ſins and ſorrows, that otherwiſe would have overtaken him, and have made his life leſs happy, and more miſerable. Young Saints often prove old Angels, but old ſinners ſeldom prove good Saints, *&c.*

Why Young men ſhould be really good betimes.

Reaſon IV.

Becauſe time is a precious Talent that

that young men muſt be countable for.

The ſooner they begin to be good, the more eaſie will be their accounts, eſpecially as to that great Talent of time. *Cato* and other Heathens held that account muſt be given, not only of our labour, but alſo of our leiſure; at the great day it will appear, that they that have ſpent their time in mourning, have done better than they that have ſpent their time in dancing; and they that have ſpent many days in humiliation, than they that have ſpent many days in idle recreations.

I have read of a devout man, who when he heard a Clock ſtrike, he would ſay, here is one hour more paſt that I have to anſwer for. Ah! young men, as time is very precious, ſo it is very ſhort; time is very ſwift, it is ſuddenly gone, in the ninth of *Job*, and the 25. *Verſe*. *My daies are ſwifter than a Poſt, they flie away, they ſee no good,* The Hebrew word (*Kalal*) tranſlated *ſwifter than*

than a poſt, ſignifies any thing that is light, becauſe light things are quick in motion.

The Ancients emblemed Time with wings, as it were not running but flying. Time is like the Sun, that never ſtands ſtill, but is ſtill a running his race; the Sun did once ſtand ſtill, yea, went back, but ſo did never time. Time is ſtill running and flying; it is a bubble, a ſhadow, a dream; can you ſeriouſly conſider of this, young men, and not *begin to be good betimes*? Surely you cannot. Sirs, if the whole earth whereupon we tread were turned into a lump of Gold, it were not able to purchaſe one minute of time! Oh the regretting of the damned, for miſ-ſpending pretious time! Oh what would they not give to be free, and to enjoy the means of grace one hour! Ah with what attention! with what intention! with what trembling and melting of heart! with what hungring and thirſting would they hear the

Sophocles, Phocylides.

Who is there among us that knows how to value time, and prize a day at a due rate? *Sen.* Epiſt.

word! Time (ſaith *Bernard*) were a good commodity in hell, and the traffick of it moſt gainful, where, for one day a man would give ten thouſand worlds if he had them. Young men, can you in good earneſt believe this, and not begin to be good betimes?

A Heathen ſaid, He lived no day without a line, that is, he did ſomething remarkable every day.

Ah Young men and women, as you love your pretious immortal Souls, as you would eſcape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would be happy in Life, and bleſſed in Death, and glorious after Death; don't ſpend any more of your pretious time, in drinking and drabbing; in carding, dicing, and dancing; don't trifle away your time; don't ſwear away your time; don't whore away your time; do not lye away your time, but begin to be good betimes, becauſe time is a Talent, that God will reckon with you for: Ah! Young men and women, you may reckon upon years, many years yet to come, when poſſibly you have not

not ſo many hours to make ready your accompts, it may be this night you may have a ſummons, and then if your time be done, and your work be to begin, in what a ſad caſe will you be; will you not wiſh that you had never been born?

Seneca was wont to jear the *Jews* for their ill husbandry, in that they loſt one day in ſeven; meaning their Sabbath; O! that it were not too true of the moſt of Profeſſors, both young and old, that they loſe not only one day in ſeven, but ſeveral daies in ſeven.

Sirs! Time let ſlip cannot be recalled, the fooliſh Virgins found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Herod* found it ſo, and *Nero* found it ſo, the *Iſraelites* found it ſo, yea, and *Jacob*, and *Joſiah*, and *David*, (though good men) yet they found it ſo to their coſt. Mat. 25.5. 1 Sam. 13. 13. Heb. 3.17, 18, 19.

The *Egyptians* draw the Picture of Time with three Heads, the firſt of a greedy Wolf, gapeing for time paſt; becauſe it hath

ravenouſly devoured the memory of ſo many things paſt recalling. The

Second of a crowned Lion roaring for time preſent, becauſe it hath the principality of all actions, for which it calls loud. The

Third of a deceitful Dog fawning for time to come, becauſe it feeds ſome men with many flattering hopes, to their eternal undoing: Ah! young men and women, as you would give up your accounts at laſt with joy, concerning this talent of time, with which God hath truſted you, *begin to to be good betimes*, &c.

Why Young perſons ſhould be really good betimes. *Seneca* (though a Heathen) could ſay, believe me, true joy is no light thing.

Reaſon V.

Becauſe they will have the greater comfort and joy when they come to be old.

The 71. *Pſalm* 5, 17, 18. compared. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, Thou art my truſt, from my youth. O God thou haſt taught me from*

from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works. Now alſo when I am old and gray-headed, O God forſake me not; untill I have ſhewed thy ſtrength unto this Generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come.

Polycarpus could ſay, when old, Thus many years have I ſerved my Maſter Chriſt, and hitherto hath he dealt well with me. If early Converts live to be old, no joy to their joy, their joy will be the greateſt joy, a joy like to the joy of Harveſt, a joy like to their joy, that divide the ſpoil, their joy will be the ſoundeſt joy, the weightieſt joy, the holieſt joy, the pureſt joy, the ſtrongeſt joy, and the moſt laſting joy; the Carnal joy of the Wicked, the gliſtring (golden) joy of the Worldling, and the flaſhing joy of the Hypocrite, is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, to the joy and comfort of ſuch, who when old, can ſay with good *Obadiah, that they feared the Lord* Iſa. 9. 3.

from their youth. If when you are young your eyes ſhall be full of tears (for ſin) when you are old your heart will be full of joys. Such ſhall have the beſt Wine at laſt.

Oh! *That Young men would begin to be goodbetimes,* that ſo they may have the greater Harveſt of Joy, when they come to be old, *&c.* 'tis ſad to be ſowing your ſeed, when you ſhould be reaping your Harveſt; 'tis beſt to gather in the Summer of youth, againſt the winter of old age.

Why young men ſhould be really-good betimes. Luk. 10. 25

Reaſon VI.

Becauſe an eternity of felicity, and glory, hangs upon thoſe few moments that are allotted to them.

It was a good queſtion the young man propoſed, *What ſhall I do to inherit eternal life?* I know I ſhall be eternally happy, or eternally miſerable, eternally bleſt, or eternally curſt, eternally ſaved, or eternally damned, *&c.*

O what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life? my cares, my fears, my troubles are all about eternity, no time can reach eternity, no age can extend to eternity, no tongue can expreſs eternity. Eternity is that (*unum perpetuum hodie*) one perpetual day, which ſhall never have end; what ſhall I do, what ſhall I not do, that I may be happy to all eternity?

I am now young, and in the flower of my daies; but who knows what a day may bring forth? the greateſt weight hangs upon the ſmalleſt wires, an eternity depends upon thoſe few hours I am to breath in the world; O! what cauſe have I therefore to be good betimes, to know God betimes, to believe betimes, to repent betimes, to get my peace made, and my pardon ſealed betimes, to get my nature changed, my conſcience purged, and my intereſt in Chriſt cleared betimes, before eternity overtakes me, before my Glaſs be out,

Æternitas eſt ſemper & immutabilis eſt. The old *Romans* were out that thought Eternity dwelt in Statues, and in Marble Monuments.

my Sun ſet, my Race run, leſt the dark night of eternity ſhould overtake me, and I made miſerable for ever.

I have read of one (*Myrogenes*) who when great gifts were ſent unto him, he ſent them all back again, ſaying, I only deſire this one thing at your Maſters hand; to pray for me, that I may be ſaved for eternity. O that all young men and women, who make Earth their Heaven, Pleaſure their Paradiſe, that eat of the fat, and drink the ſweet, that cloath themſelves richly, and crown their heads with Roſe-buds, that they would ſeriouſly conſider of eternity, ſo to hear as for eternity, and pray as for eternity, and live as for eternity, and provide as for eternity! that they may ſay with that famous Painter *Zeuxes* (*Æternitati pingo*) I paint for eternity, we do all for eternity, we believe for eternity, we repent for eternity, we obey for eternity, *&c.*

Luk. 15. 19, 20.

Oh that you would not make thoſe

thoſe things eternal for puniſhment, that cannot be eternal for uſe.

Cur ea quæ ad uſum diuturna eſſe non poſſunt, ad ſupplicium diuturnum deposcet? Ambroſe in Luk. 4. T. 5.

Ah! Young men and women, Chriſt calls, and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt calls, and the Spirit of Chriſt in the Goſpel calls, and the rage of Satan calls, and your ſad ſtate and condition calls, and the happineſs and bleſſedneſs of glorified Saints calls; theſe all call aloud upon you to make ſure a glorious Eternity, before you ſail out into the dreadful Ocean. All your eternal good depends upon the ſhort and uncertain moments o your lives; and if the thread of your lives ſhould be cut before a happy eternity is made ſure, wo to you that ever you were born; Do not ſay, O Young man, that thou art young, and hereafter will be time enough to provide for Eternity; for Eternity may be at the door ready to carry thee away for ever. Every days experience ſpeaks out Eternity to be as near the young mans back,

as 'tis before the old mans face.

O graſp to day the Diadem of a bleſſed eternity, leſt thou art cut off before the morning comes! though there is but one way to come into this world, yet there is a thouſand thouſand waies to be ſent out of this world; Well Young men and women, remember this, as the motions of the ſoul are quick, ſo are the motions of Divine Juſtice quick alſo; and if you will not hear the voice of God to day, if you will not provide for eternity to day, God may ſwear to morrow that you ſhall never enter into his reſt; it is a very ſad and dangerous thing to trifle and dally with God, his Word, his Offers, our own ſouls and eternity: Therefore let all young people labour to be good betimes, and not to let him, that is goodneſs it ſelf, alone, till he hath made them good, till he hath given them thoſe hopes of Eternity, that will both make them good, and keep them good,

Heb. 3. 7, 8, 15, 16, 18, 19.

good, that will make them happy, and keep them happy, and that for ever; if all this will not do, then know that e're long those fears of eternity, of misery, that beget that monster, Despair, which like *Medusa*'s Head, astonisheth with its very aspect, and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul, will certainly overtake you; as it is said, *Dum Spiro, Spero*, so it may be inverted, *Dum Spero, Spiro*; other miseries may wound the spirit, but Despair kills it dead; my prayers shall be that none of you may ever experience this sad truth, but that you may all be good in good earnest betimes, which will yield you two Heavens, a Heaven on Earth, and a Heaven after death.

Why Young persons should be really good betimes.

Reason VII.

Because they do not begin to live, till they begin to be really good.

Till they begin to be good, they are

are dead God-wards, and Chriſt-wards, and Heaven-wards, and Holineſs-wards; till a man begins to be really good; he is really dead, *Philippians* 2. 1. and that,

Reſpectu operis. First in reſpect of working, his works are called dead works, *Heb.* 9. 13. the moſt gliſtering ſervices of unregenerate perſons, are but dead works, becauſe they proceed not from a principle of Life, and they lead to death, *Rom.* 6. 21. and leave a ſentence of death upon the ſoul, till it be waſhed off by the blood of the Lamb.

Reſpectu honoris. Secondly, He is dead in reſpect of honour, he is dead to all priviledges, he is not fit to inherit mercy; who will ſet the Crown of Life upon a Dead man? The Crown of life is only for living Chriſtians, *Revelations* 2. 10. The young Prodigal was dead till he begun to be good, till he begun to remember his Father's houſe, and to reſolve to return home, *My Son was dead but is alive*;

Luk. 15. 24.

live; and the Widow that liveth in pleaſure, is dead while ſhe liveth.

1 Tim. 5. 6. As it is a reproach to an old man to be in Coats, ſo 'tis a diſgrace to be an old babe, i. e. to be but a babe in grace, when old in years. Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.

When *Joſaphat* asked *Barlaam*, how old he was? he anſwered, five and forty years old; to whom *Joſaphat* replyed, thou ſeemeſt to be ſeventy; true ſaith he, if you reckon ever ſince I was born; but I count not thoſe years which were ſpent in vanity.

Ah Sirs! you never begin to live till you begin to be good in good earneſt. There is the life of Vegetation, and that is the life of Plants: Secondly, there is the life of Senſe, and that is the life of Beaſts; Thirdly, there is the life of Reaſon, and that is the life of Man; Fourthly, there is the life of Grace, and that is the life of Saints; and this life you do not begin to live till you begin to be good: If a living Dog is better than a dead Lyon, as the Wiſe man ſpeaks, and if a Flie is more excellent than the Heavens, becauſe the Flie hath

Eccl. 9. 4

bath life, which the Heavens have not, as the Philosopher saith; what a sad, a dead poor nothing is that person that is a stranger to the life of grace and goodness, that is dead even whilst he is alive?

Mæcenas in *Seneca* had rather live in many diseases, than die. And *Homer* reporteth of his *Achilles*, that he had rather be a servant to a poor Country Clown here, than to be a King to all the souls departed.

Most men will bleed, sweat, vomit, purge, part with an estate, yea, with a limb, yea, limbs, yea, and many a better thing, (*viz.* the honour of God and a good Conscience) to preserve their Natural lives: as he cries out: Give me any deformity, any torment, any misery, so you spare my life; and yet how few, how very few are to be found, who make it their work, their business, to attain to a life of goodness, or to begin to be good betimes, or to be dead to the world, and alive to God, rather than to be dead to God, and alive to the world? this is for a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that natural life is so highly prized, and spiritual life so little regarded, &c.

Rea-

Reaſon VIII.

Becauſe the Promiſe of finding God, of enjoying God, is made over to an early ſeeking of God.

Why Young ſhould be really good betimes.

Prov. 8. 17. *I love them that love me, and they that ſeek me early, ſhall find me.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, they that ſeek me in the morning, ſhall find me By the benefit of the morning light we come to find the things we ſeek. *Shahhar* ſignifies to ſeek inquiſitively, to ſeek diligently, to ſeek timely in the morning. As the *Iſraelites* went early in the Morning, to ſeek for Manna. And as Students riſe early in the Morning, and ſit cloſe to it, to get knowledge; ſo ſaith wiſdom, *They that ſeek me in the ſpring and morning of their youth, ſhall find me.*

שחר Ex. 16. 21.

Now to ſeek the Lord early, is to ſeek the Lord firſtly. God hath in himſelf all the good of Angels, of Men, and Univerſal Nature; he hath all glories, all dignities, all riches, all treaſures, all

Scipio went firſt to the Capitol and then to the Senate.

Tully an Heathen frequently called God *Optimum maximum*, the beſt and greateſt. God is *omnis ſuper omnia.*

all pleaſures, all comforts, all delights, all joys, all beatitudes, God is that one infinite perfection in himſelf, which is eminently, and virtually all perfections of the creatures, and therefore he is firſtly to be ſought. Abſtracts do better expreſs him, than Concretes and Adjectives; he is Being, Bounty, Power, Wiſdom, Juſtice, Mercy, goodneſs, and love it ſelf, and therefore worthy to be ſought before all other things. Seek ye firſt the good things of the mind, ſaith *Philoſophy*; and doth not *Divinity* ſay as much?

Cicero.

Days of grace have their dates, therefore take heed of ſaying, *Cras, cras*, to morrow, to morrow.

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek opportunely, to ſeek while the opportunity does preſent, *Judg.* 9. 33. *Thou ſhalt riſe early, and ſet upon the City*; that is, thou ſhalt opportunely ſet upon the City.

Such there have been, who by giving a glaſs of Water opportunely, have obtained a Kingdom, as you may ſee in the ſtory of *Thamaſtus*, and King *Agrippa*.

Ah!

Ah! Young Men and Women, you do not know, but that by an early, by an opportune ſeeking of God, you may obtain a Kingdom that ſhakes not, and Glory that paſſeth not away. Heb. 12. 28

There is a ſeaſon wherein God may be found, *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near*; and if you ſlip this ſeaſon, you may ſeek him, and miſs him. *Though they cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them, when they make many prayers, I will not hear. Then ſhall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear. Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but ſhall not find me.* This was *Saul's* miſery; *The Philiſtins are upon me, and God will not anſwer me*; 'tis juſtice that they ſhould ſeek, and not find at laſt, who might have found, had they but ſought ſeaſonably and opportunely, *&c.* Iſa. 55. 6. Jer. 11. 11. Iſa. 1. 15. Mic. 3. 4. Prov. 1. 8.

Again

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek earneſtly, affectionately. *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea, with my ſpirit within me, will I ſeek thee early:* The Hebrew word ſignifies both an earneſt, and an early ſeeking: in the morning the ſpirits are up, and men are earneſt, lively, and affectionate.

Iſa. 26. 9.

Ah! ſuch a ſeeking ſhall certainly be crowned with finding: *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord in the morning will I direct* (Hebrew, martial) *my prayer unto thee, and will look up,* (Hebrew, look out like a watch-man) *Let all thoſe that put their truſt in thee rejoice, let them ever ſhout for joy; becauſe thou defendeſt them,* (Hebrew, thou covereſt over, or protecteſt them.) *Let them alſo that love thy Name, be joyful in thee: for thou Lord wilt bleſs the Righteous, with favour wilt thou compaſs him* (Hebrew, crown him) *as with a ſhield.* None have ever thus ſought the Lord, but they have, or certainly ſhall find.

Pſal. 5. 3, 11, 12. אערך ואצפה

find him. *Seek and ye ſhall find*, Mat. 7. 7. *Your hearts ſhall live that ſeek God*, Pſalm 69. 32. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, James 5. 16. or as the Greek hath it, *The working prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; that prayer that ſets the whole man to work, will work wonders in Heaven, in the heart, and in the earth. Earneſt prayer, like *Sauls* Sword, and *Jonathans* Bow, never returns empty.

ἐνεργου-μένη. It ſignifies ſuch a working as notes the liveliеſt activity that can be.

One ſpeaking of *Luther*, who was a man very earneſt in prayer, ſaid, (*hic homo potuit apud Deum quod voluit*) this man could have what he would of God, *&c.*

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek chiefly, primarily, after this or that thing; what we firſt ſeek, we ſeek as chief. Now to ſeek the Lord early, is to ſeek him primarily, chiefly, in the 63. *Pſalm*, and 1. *verſe Thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee*, that is, I will ſeek thee, as my choiceſt, and my

Omne bonum in ſummo bono.

my chiefeſt good. God is *Alpha* the fountain from whence all grace ſprings, and *Omega*, the Sea to which all glory runs, and therefore early and primarily to be ſought. God is a perfect good, a ſolid good (*id bonum perfectum dicitur cui nil accedere, ſolidum cui nil decedere poteſt. Lactantius*) that is a perfect good, to which nothing can be added; that a ſolid, from which nothing can be ſpared; ſuch a good God is, and therefore early and chiefly to be ſought. God is a pure and ſimple good, he is a light in whom there is no darkneſs, a good in whom there is no evil. The goodneſs of the Creature is mixt, yea, that little goodneſs that is in the Creature, is mixed with much evil, but God is an unmix'd good, he is good, he is a pure good, he is all over good, he is nothing but good. God is an All-ſufficient good, *walk before me and be upright, I am God All-ſufficient*, in the 17. of *Geneſis* and 1. verſe. *Habet omnia qui habet*

1 Joh. 1. 5.

Quicquid in Deo, eſt ipſe Deus.

habet habentem omnia. Aug. He hath all, that hath the haver of all. God hath in himſelf all power to defend you, all wiſdom to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to enrich you, all righteouſneſs to cloath you; all goodneſs to ſupply you, and all happineſs to Crown you. God is a ſatisfying good, a good that fills the heart and quiets the ſoul: in the 33. of *Geneſis*, and the 11. *verſ. I have enough*, ſaith good *Jacob*, *I have all* ſaith *Jacob*, for ſo the Hebrew hath it (*Cholli*) I have all, I have all comforts, all delights, all contents, *&c.* In having nothing, I have all things, becauſe I have Chriſt, having therefore all things in him I ſeek no other reward, for *he is the univerſall reward*, ſaith one. As the worth and vaule of many pieces of Silver is to be found in one piece of Gold: So all the petty excellencies that are ſcattered abroad in the Creatures, are to be found in God; yea, all the whole Volume of Perfections, which Cant. 2.2.

which is ſpread through Heaven and Earth, is Epitomized in him. No good, below him that is the greateſt good, can ſatisfie the ſoul; a good wife, a good child, a good name, a good eſtate, a good friend, cannot ſatisfie the ſoul; theſe may pleaſe, but they cannot ſatisfie. All abundance, if it be not my God, is to me nothing but poverty, and want, ſaid one.

Omnis copia quæ non eſt Deus meus, mihi egeſtas eſt. Aug. Soliloq. c. 13.

Ah! that young men and women would but in the morning of their youth, ſeek, yea ſeek early, ſeek earneſtly, ſeek affectionately, ſeek diligently, ſeek primarily, and ſeek unweariedly this God, who is the greateſt good, the beſt good, the moſt deſirable good; who is a ſuitable good, a pure good, a ſatisfying good, a total good, and an eternal good.

Why Young perſons ſhould be really good betimes.

Reaſon IX.

Becauſe the time of youth is the choiceſt and fitteſt time for ſervice.

Now

Now your parts are lively, ſenſes freſh, memory ſtrong, and nature vigorous, the daies of your youth, are the ſpring and morning of your time, they are the firſt-born of your ſtrength, therefore God requires your non-age, as well as your dotage, the Wine of your times, as well as the Lees, as you may ſee typified to you in the firſt fruits which were dedicated to the Lord, and the firſt-born. The time of youth, is the time of ſalvation; it is the acceptable time, it is thy ſummer, thy Harveſt time. O young man! therefore do not ſleep, but up and be doing, awaken thy heart, rouze up thy ſoul, and improve all thou haſt, put out thy reaſon, thy ſtrength, thy all, to the treaſuring up of heavenly Graces, precious Promiſes, divine experiences, and ſpiritual comforts againſt the Winter of old age; and then old age, will not be to thee an evil age, but as it was to *Abraham*, *a good old age*; do not put off God with fair

The days of youth are called, *ætas bona*, in *Cicero*. and *ætas optima* in *Seneca*.

Ex. 13. 2.

ch. 22. 9.

Gen. 25. 28.

fair promiſes and large pretences, till your laſt ſands are running, and the days of dotage have overtaken you. That is a ſad word of the Prophet, *Curſed be the Deceiver, which hath in his Flock a Male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.*

Mal. 1. 14.

Ah! Young men and women, who are like the Almond-tree, you have many Males in the Flock, your ſtrength is a Male in the flock, your time is a Male in the flock, your reaſon is a Male in the flock, your parts are a Male in flock, and your gifts are a Male in the flock; now if he be curſt that hath but one Male in his flock, and ſhall offer to God a corrupt thing, a thing of no worth, of no value, how will you be curſt, and curſt? curſt at home, and curſt abroad, curſt temporally, curſt ſpiritually, and curſt eternally, who have many Males in your flock, and yet deal ſo unworthily, ſo fraudulently, and falſe-heartedly with God, as to put him off with the dregs of your

Jer. 1. 11. The Almond-tree bloſſoms in *January* (while it is yet winter) and the fruit is ripe in *March*.

your time and ſtrength while you ſpend the Primroſe of your youth in the ſervice of the World, the Fleſh and the Devil.

The Fig-tree in the Goſpel, that did not bring forth fruit timely and ſeaſonably, was curſt to admiration; the time of youth is the time and ſeaſon for bringing forth the fruits of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and if theſe fruits be not brought forth in their ſeaſon, you may juſtly fear, that the curſes of Heaven will ſecretly, and inſenſibly ſoak, and ſink into your ſouls, and then wo, wo to you, that ever you were born; the beſt way to prevent this Hell of Hells, is to give God the Cream and flower of your Youth, your Strength, your Time, your Talent; Veſſels that are betime ſeaſoned with the ſavour of life, never loſe it, *Prov.* 22. 6. Mat. 21. 22.

Why Young perſons ſhould be really good (in good earneſt) betimes.

Reaſon X.

Becauſe death may ſuddenly and

expectedly ſeize upon you, you have no leaſe of your lives.

Pares naſcuntur, pares moriuntur, in the womb, and in the tomb, they are all alike. Job 21.23, 24. 'Tis an allegorical deſcription of the higheſt proſperity.

Youth is as fickle as old age, the young man may find Graves enough of his length in burial places; as green Wood, and old Logs meet in one fire, ſo young ſinners and old ſinners meet (in one Hell) and burn together; when the young man is in his ſpring and prime, then he is cut off, and dies; one dieth in his full ſtrength (or in the ſtrength of his perfection, as the Hebrew hath it) being wholly at eaſe and quiet; His breaſts are full of milk, and his bones are moiſtened with marrow. *David's* children died when young, ſo did *Job's* and *Jeroboam's*, *&c.* Every days experience tells us, that the young mans life is as much a vapour, as the old mans is.

I have read of an *Italian* Poet, who brings in a proper Young man, rich and potent, diſcourſing with Death in the habit of a Mower, with his Sythe in his hand,

hand, cutting down the life of man (*For all Fleſh is graſs*, Iſa. 40. 6.) and wilt thou not ſpare any mans perſon, ſaith the young man? I ſpare none, ſaith Death, mans life is but a day, a ſhort day, a winters day, oft times the Sun goes down upon a man, before it be well up, your day is ſhort, your work is great, your journey long, and therefore you ſhould riſe early, and ſet forward towards Heaven betimes, as that man doth that hath a long journey to go in a winters day.

Deaths motto is, Nulli cedo, *I yield to none.*

The life of man is abſolutely ſhort. *Behold thou haſt made my days as an hands-breadth.* The life of man is comparatively ſhort, and that if you compare mans life now to what he might have reacht, had he continued in Innocency. Sin brought in Death, Death is a fall, that came in by a fall. Or if you compare mans life now, to what they did reach to before the Flood, then ſeveral lived ſix, ſeven, eight, nine hun-

Pſal. 39. 5

Gen. 5.

dred years; or if you compare mens daies with the daies of God, *Mine age is as nothing before thee*; or if you compare the daies of man, to the daies of Eternity.

Psal. 39. 5.

Ah! Young men, young men, can you seriously consider of the brevity of mans life, and trifle away your time, the offers of grace, your pretious Souls, and Eternity, *&c?* Surely you cannot, surely you dare not; if you do but in good earnest ponder upon the shortness of mans life. It is recorded of *Philip* King of *Macedon*, that he gave a pension to one, to come to him every day at dinner, and to cry to him *(Memento te esse mortalem)* remember thou art but mortal.

The Heathen could say, that the whole life of man should be nothing else but *(Meditatio mortis)* a meditation of death.

Ah! Young men and Old had need be often put in mind of their mortality, they are too apt to forget that day, yea, to put far from them the thoughts of that day. I have read of three that could not endure to hear that bitter word,

Death,

Death, mentioned in their ears, and ſurely this age is full of ſuch monſters.

And as the life of man is very ſhort, ſo it is very uncertain, now well, now ſick, alive this hour, and dead the next. Death doth not alwaies give warning before-hand, ſometimes he gives the mortal blow ſuddenly, he comes behind with his dart, and ſtrikes a man at the heart, before he ſaith, *Have I found thee, O mine Enemy? Eutychus* fell down dead ſuddenly, *Acts* 20. 9. Death ſuddenly arreſted *David*'s Sons, and *Job*'s Sons; *Auguſtus* died in a Complement; *Galba*, with a Sentence; *Veſpaſian*, with a Jeſt; *Zeuxes* died laughing at the Picture of an old Woman, which he drew with his own hand; *Sophocles* was choaked with the ſtone in a Grape; *Diodorus* the Logician died for ſhame, that he could not anſwer a joculary queſtion propounded at the table by *Stilpo*; *Joannes Meaſius*, preaching upon the raiſing of the woman

Petrarch telleth of one who being invited to dinner the next day, anſwered, *Ego à multis annis, craſtinum non habui.* I have not had a morrow for this many years.

of *Naims* Son from the dead, within three hours after died himſelf.

Ah! Young men and Women, have you not cauſe, great cauſe to be good betimes, for Death is ſudden in his approaches, nothing more ſure than Death, and nothing more uncertain than Life! therefore know the Lord betimes, turn from your ſins betimes, lay hold on the Lord, and make peace with him betimes, that you may never ſay, as *Cæſar Borgias* ſaid, when he was ſick to death, When I lived (ſaid he) I provided for every thing but Death, now I muſt die, and am unprovided to die, *&c.*

Reaſon XI.

Why young men ſhould be really good betimes.

Becauſe it is ten to one, nay an hundred to one if ever they are converted, if they are not converted when they are young.

God

God uſually begins with ſuch betimes, that he hath had thoughts of love and mercy towards from everlaſting: The inſtances cited to prove the Doctrine, confirm this Argument; and if you look abroad in the World, you ſhall hardly find one Saint among a thouſand, but dates his converſion from the time of his Youth. 'Twas the young ones that got through the Wilderneſs into *Canaan*. If the tree do not bud, and bloſſom, and bring forth fruit in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after; if in the Spring and Morning of your daies, you do not bring forth fruit to God, it is an hundred to one, that ever you bring forth fruit to him, when the evil daies of old age ſhall overtake you, wherein you ſhall ſay, you have no pleaſure. For as the Son of *Sirach* obſerves, if thou haſt gathered nothing in thy youth, what canſt thou find in thy age? 'Tis rare, very rare that God ſows and reaps in old

Hoſ. 11. 1. When *Iſrael* was a child, then I loved him, &c.

Numb. 26. 64. An Hebrew Doctor obſerves, that of thoſe ſix hundred thouſand that went out of *Ægypt*, there were but two perſons that entred *Canaan*. Eccl. 25. 5.

age, uſually God ſows the ſeed of grace in youth, that yields the harveſt of joy in age.

Though true Repentance be never too late, yet late Repentance is ſeldom true. Millions are now in Hell, who have pleaſed themſelves with the thoughts of after-Repentance. The Lord hath made a promiſe to late Repentance, but where hath he made a Promiſe of late Repentance? Yea, what can be more juſt and equal, that ſuch ſhould ſeek, and not find, who might have found, but would not ſeek, and that he ſhould ſhut his ears againſt their late prayers, who have ſtopt their ears againſt his early Calls? The Ancient Warriours would not accept an old man into their Army, as being unfit for ſervice, and doſt thou think that God will accept of thy dry bones, when Satan hath ſuckt out all the marrow? what Lord, what Maſter, will take ſuch into their ſervice, who have all their daies ſerved their ene-

Prov. 1. 24, 32.

enemies? and will God, will God? The *Circaſſians* (a kind of Mongril Chriſtians) are ſaid to divide their life between ſin and devotion, dedicating their Youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance; if this be thy caſe, I would not be in thy caſe for ten thouſand worlds. *Breerw. Enqui.*

I have read of a certain great man, that was admoniſhed in his ſickneſs to repent; who anſwered, that he would not repent yet, for if he ſhould recover, his companions would laugh at him; but growing ſicker and ſicker, his friends preſſed him again to repent, but then he told them it was too late (*Qui jam judicatus ſum, & condemnatus*) for now ſaid he, I am judged and condemned. *Beda* hath this ſtory.

Reaſon XII.

Why Young perſons ſhould be really good betimes.

Becauſe elſe they will never attain to the honour of being Old Diſciples.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

It is a very great honour to be an old Diſciple.

NOw this honour none reach to but ſuch as are converted betimes, but ſuch as turn to the Lord in the ſpring and morning of their youth: 'tis no honour for an old man to be in coats, nor for an old man to be a babe in grace. An A, B, C. old man, is a ſad and ſhameful ſight: O but it is a mighty honour to be a man when he is old, that he can date his converſion from the morning of his youth. Now that it is an honour to be an old Diſciple, I ſhall prove by an induction of Particulars. As,

What more ridiculous than (*puer centum annorum*) a child of an hundred years old?

Particular I.

All men will honour an old Diſciple, Prov. 16. 31. *The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs.* God requires that the aged ſhould be honoured,

A Crown is a very glorious thing, but there are but few of them.

noured, *Levit.* 19.32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man* (the old man here, is expounded by some, the wise man) *and fear thy God, I am the Lord.* Hoarineſs is only honourable, when found in a way of righteouſneſs; a white head accompanied with a holy heart, makes a man truly honourable. There are two glorious ſights in the World, the one is, a young man walking in his uprightneſs; and the other is an old man walking in ways of righteouſneſs; 'Twas *Abraham's* honour that he went to his grave in a good old age; or rather, as the Hebrew hath it, with a good gray head; many there be that go to their graves with a gray head, but this was *Abraham's* Crown, that he went to his grave with a good gray head; had *Abraham's* head been never ſo gray, if it had not been good, it would have been no honour to him; a hoary head, when coupled with an unſanctified heart, is rather a curſe than a bleſſing; Gen. 25.8.

Isa.65.20. blessing, when the head is white as Snow, and the Soul, as black as Hell; God usually gives up such to the greatest scorn and contempt.

Lam.5.12. Princes are hanged up by their hands, the faces of Elders were not honoured, and this God had threatned long before.

Deut.28. 49,50. *The Lord shall bring against thee a Nation from far, a Nation of fierce Countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.*

I have read of *Cleanthes*, who was wont sometimes to chide himself, *Ariston*, wondring thereat asked him, whom chidest thou? *Cleanthes* laughed and answered, I chide an old Fellow (*qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*) who hath his gray hairs indeed, but wants understanding and prudence worthy of them. The Application I will leave to the gray heads, and gray beards of our time, who have little else to commend them to the world, but their hoary heads, and snowy beards.

Par-

Particular II.

God usually reveals himself most to Old Disciples, to Old Saints, Job 12. 12. *With the Ancient is Wisdom, and in length of daies, Understanding.* God usually manifests most of himself, to aged Saints, they usually pray most, and pay most, they labour most, and long most after the choisest manifestations of himself, and of his grace; and therefore he opens his bosom most to them, and makes them of his Cabinet Council, *Gen.*18.17,19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, for I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which he hath spoken of him.* *Abraham* was an old friend, and therefore God makes him both of his Court and Council; we usually open our hearts most freely, fully, and familiarly, to

בישישים in the antient is wisdom, *Valentiniianus* the Emperors Motto, was (*amicus veterrimus optimus*) an old friend is best.

to old friends: So doth God to his ancient friends. Ah! what a bleſſed ſight and enjoyment of Chriſt had old *Simeon*, that made his very heart to dance in him! *Now Lord letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace according to thy Word, for mine eyes have ſeen thy Salvation*, &c. I have ſeen him, who is my light, my life, my love, my joy, my crown, my Heaven, my all; therefore now let *thy Servant depart in peace*. So *Anna*, when ſhe was fourſcore and four years old, was ſo filled with the diſcoveries and enjoyments of Chriſt, that ſhe could not but declare what ſhe had taſted, felt, ſeen, heard, and received from the Lord: She was ripe, and ready to diſcover the fulneſs, ſweetneſs, goodneſs, excellency, and glory of that Chriſt, whom ſhe had long loved, feared, and ſerved. So *Paul* lived in the light, ſight, and ſweet enjoyments of Chriſt, when aged, in years, in grace. So, when had *John* that glorious viſion of Chriſt among the

Luk. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Verſ. 36, 37, 38.

Phil. 4. 5, 7, 9.

Rev. 1. 7. to *ult.*

the golden Candlesticks, and those discoveries and manifestations of the ruine of *Rome*, the fall of Antichrist, the casting the beast, and false Prophet into a Lake of Fire, the conquest of the Kingdoms of the World, by Christs Bow and Sword, the binding up of Satan, and the New *Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, but when he was old, when he was aged, in Years and in Grace? The Lord speaks many a secret in the ears of aged Saints, of old Christians, which young Christians are not acquainted with, as that Phrase imports, 2 *Sam.* 7.27. *Thou O Lord God of Hosts hast revealed to thy Servant*, so you read it in your books, but in the Hebrew it is, Lord thou hast revealed this to the ear of thy Servant. Some wonder how that word to the ear came to be left out in your books, in which indeed the Emphasis lies; we will tell many things in an old friends ear, which we will not acquaint young ones with. So doth God many times

גליתי
את אזן
Glaitha
eth ozen.

times whiſper an old Diſciple in the ear, and acquaints him with ſuch things that he hides from thoſe that are of younger years. And by this you may ſee what an honour it is to be an Old Diſciple.

Particular III.

An Old Diſciple, an Old Chriſtian he hath got the art of ſerving God, the Art of Religion, got the Art of hearing, the Art of praying, the Art of meditating, the Art of repenting, the Art of believing, the Art of denying his natural ſelf, his ſinful ſelf, his religious ſelf.

Heb. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yet as *Solomon* was not aſhamed to ſay, that in his old age, he was a learner, ſo thoſe that are the greateſt Artiſts in in Chriſtianity, will confeſs that they are ſtill but learners.

All Trades have their myſtery and difficulty; ſo hath the Trade of Chriſtianity: young Chriſtians uſually bungle in Religious works, but old Chriſtians acquit themſelves, like work-men that need not be aſhamed. A young Carpenter gives more blows, and makes more chips, but an old Artiſt doth the moſt, and beſt work; a young Chriſtian may make moſt noiſe in religious Duties, but

an old Christian makes the best work. A young Musician may play more quick and nimble upon an instrument, than an old, but an old Musician hath more skill and judgement than a young: the Application is easie; and by this you may also see, what an honour it is to be an old Christian.

Particular IV.

An Old Disciple, an old Christian, is rich in spiritual experiences. O the experiences that he hath of the waies of God, of the Workings of God, of the Word of God, of the Love of God! O the divine stories that old Christians can tell of the power of the Word, of the sweetness of the Word, of the usefulness of the Word! as a light to lead the soul, as a staff to support the soul, as a spirit to quicken the soul, as an anchor to stay the soul, and as a cordial to comfort and strengthen the soul! O the stories that he can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the blood of Christ, the Offices

1 Joh. 2. 1. Psal. 119. 49, 50. Old men love to speak of ancient things.

Offices of Christ, the Merits of Christ, the righteousnes of Christ, the graces of Christ, and the influence of Christ. O the stories that an old Disciple can tell you of the in-dwellings of the Spirit, of the operations of the Spirit, of the teachings of the Spirit, of the leadings of the Spirit, of the sealings of the Spirit, of the witnessings of the Spirit, and of the comforts and joys of the Spirit! O the stories that an old Christian can tell you, of the evil of sin, the bitterness of Sin, the deceitfulness of Sin, the prevalency of Sin, and the happiness of the conquest over Sin! O the stories that he can tell you, of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulness of Satan, and the waies of triumphing over Satan! As an old Souldier can tell you, of many battels, many fears, many wounds, many losses, and many Victories, even to admiration: So an old Saint is able to tell you many

many divine ſtories, even to admiration.

Pliny writes of the Crocodile, that ſhe grows to her laſt day: So aged Saints, they grow rich in ſpiritual experience to the laſt. An Old Chriſtian being once asked, if he grew in goodneſs, anſwered, yea, doubtleſs I do, for God hath ſaid, *The Righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree* (now the Palm-tree never loſeth his leaf, or fruit, ſaith *Pliny*) *he ſhall grow like a Cedar in* Lebanon. *Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Court of our God; They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.*

Hoſ. 14.5, 6, 7.

pſal. 29. 12, 13, 14.

A fellow to this Promiſe *Iſaiah* mentions, *Hearken unto me, O houſe of Jacob, and all the remnant of the houſe of Iſrael, which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age; I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you.*

Iſa. 46. 3, 4.

There

Dan. 7. 9, 13, 22.

There is nothing more commendable in fulneſs of age, than fulneſs of knowledge and experience, nor nothing more honourable, than to ſee Ancient Chriſtians very much acquainted with the Ancient of daies.

It is a brave ſight to ſee Ancient Chriſtians like the Almond-tree. Now the Almond-tree doth flouriſh, and is full of bloſſoms in the Winter of old age; for as *Pliny* tells us, the Almond-tree doth bloſſom in the month of *January*. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions and expreſſions; a ſanctified heart is better than a ſilver tongue; no man ſo rich, ſo honourable, ſo happy as the old Diſciple, that is rich in Spiritual experiences, and yet there is no Chriſtian ſo rich in his experiences, but he would be richer.

The Lawyer.

As *Julianus* ſaid, that when he had one foot in the grave, he would have the other in the School: ſo though an Old Diſciple hath one foot in the grave, yet

yet he will have the other in Christs School, that he may still be treasuring up more and more Divine Experiments; and by this also you see, *what an honour it is to be an Old Disciple*, &c.

Particular V.

An Old Disciple is very stout, couragious, firm and fixt in his resolution.

An old Christian is like a Pillar, a Rock, nothing can move him, nothing can shake him; what is suckt in youth, will abide in old age; Old Souldiers are stout and couragious, nothing can daunt nor discourage them. When *Joshua* was an hundred and ten years old, O how couragious and resolute was he! *And if it seem evil unto you, to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the Flood, or the Gods of the Ammonites, in whose Land ye dwell, but as for me and my house we will serve the* Psal. 44. 9. *ult.*

Josh. 24. 15, 29.

the Lord. And it came to paſs, after theſe things, that Joſhua the Son of Nun, the Servant of the Lord died, being an hundred and ten years old.

Conſidius, a Senator of *Rome*, told *Cæſar* boldly, that the Senators durſt not come to Council, for fear of his Souldiers; he replyed, why then doſt thou go to the Senate? he anſwered, becauſe my age takes away my fear.

Ah! none ſo couragious, none ſo divinely fearleſs, none ſo careleſs in evil daies, as ancient Chriſtians. An old Chriſtian knows, that that good will do him no good, which is not made good by perſeverance; his reſolution is like that of *Gonſalvo*, who proteſted to his Souldiers, ſhewing them *Naples*, that he had rather die one foot forwards, than to have his life ſecured for long, by one foot of retreat. Shall ſuch a man as I am flee, ſaid undaunted *Nehemiah?* he will couragiouſly venture life and limb, rather than by one foot of retreat,

Ne.6.11.

retreat, discredit his profession with the reproach of fearfulness. It was a brave magnanimous speech of *Luther*, when dangers from opposers did threaten him, and his associates; Come (saith he) let us sing the forty sixth *Psalm*, and then let them do their worst.

Aristotle (though a Heathen) could say, that in some cases a man had better lose his life than be cowardly, *Arist. Ethic.* 3. c. 1.

When *Polycarpus* was fourscore and six years old, he suffered Martyrdom couragiously, resolutely, and undauntedly.

When one of the Ancient Martyrs was very much threatned by his Persecutors, he replyed, there is nothing of things visible, nothing of things invisible that I fear, I will stand to my profession of the Name of Christ, and contend earnestly, for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, come on it what will.

Old Disciples, Old Souldiers of Christ, they have the heart and courage of *Shammah*, one of *David*'s Worthies, who stood and defended the field, when all the rest fled. The Hebrews call a young man *Nagnar*,

2 Sam. 23. 11, 12.

Mat. 19. 20, 21, 22.

Nagnar, which ſprings from a root that ſignifies to ſhake off, or to be toſſed to and fro, to note how fickle, and how conſtant in inconſtancy young man are, they uſually are perſons either of no reſolution for good, or of weak reſolution; they are too often won with a Nut, and loſt with an Apple; but now, aged Chriſtians, in all Earthquakes they ſtand faſt, like Mount *Sion*, that cannot be removed. And by this alſo you may ſee, *What an honour it is to be an Old Diſciple*, an old Chriſtian.

Particular VI.

Rom. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 24. ch. 6. 14.

An Old Diſciple, an old Chriſtian is prepared for death, he hath been long a dying to ſin, to the world, to friends, to ſelf, to relations, to all, and no man ſo prepared to die, as he that thus daily dies.

Rom. 14. 7. 8. Phil. 2. 21, 22, 23.

An Old Diſciple hath lived ſincerely to Chriſt, he hath lived eminently to Chriſt, he hath lived in all conditions, and under all changes to Chriſt, he hath lived exemplarily to Chriſt, he hath lived

ed long to Christ, and therefore the more prepared to die, and be with Christ. An old Disciple hath a Crown in his eye, a pardon in his bosom, and a Christ in his arms; and therefore may sweetly sing it out with old *Simeon*, *Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace.* As *Hillary* said to his Soul; Soul, thou hast served Christ this seventy years, and art thou afraid of Death? Go out Soul, go out.

Many a day said old *Cowper*, have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience, distrust or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. *Nazianzen* calls upon the King of terrours, devour me, devour me. And *Augustine*, when old, could say, shall I die ever? yes, or shall I die at all? yes, why then Lord, if ever why not now? why not now? So when *Modestus* the Emperours Lieutenant threatned to kill *Basil*, he answered, if that be all, I fear not; yea, your Master cannot more pleasure me, than

Zeno a wise Heathen said, I have no fear but of old age.

Cyprian could receive the cruellest sentence of death, with a *Deo gratias* God thank thee.

in ſending me unto my Heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I deſire to haſten.

It was the ſaying of an Ancient Miniſter a little before his death, I cannot ſay, I have ſo lived, that I ſhould now be afraid to die, but this I can ſay, I have ſo learned Chriſt, that I am not afraid to die.

Iſa. 57. 1, 2. Old Chriſtians have made no more to die, than to Dine. It is nothing to die, when the Comforter ſtands by. Old Diſciples know that to die, is but to lie down in their beds, they know that

Eccl. 7. 1. their dying day is better than their birth day; and this made *Salomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his diſſolution before the day of his Coronation.

The Ancients were wont to call the daies of their death, *Natalia*, not dying daies, but birth-daies.

The *Jews* to this day, ſtick not to call their *Golgothaes*, *Bate Caiim*, the houſes or places of the Living; Old Chriſtians know, that

that death is but an entrance into life, 'tis but a Pass-over, a *Jubilee*, 'tis but the Lords Gentleman-usher to conduct them to Heaven, and this prepares them to die, and makes death more desirable than life, and by this you may see, *that it is an Honour to be an Old Disciple.*

Particular VII.

An Old Disciple, an Old Christian shall have a great reward in Heaven.

1 Cor. 15. *ult.* 2 Cor. 9. 6. Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. God will reward his Servants *Secundum laborem*, according to their labour, though not *Secundum promeritum*, according to the fulness of their labour.

Old Christians have done much and suffered much for Christ; and the more any man doth or suffers for Christ here, the more glory he shall have hereafter. 'Twas the saying of an Old Disciple upon his dying bed, He is come, He is come (meaning the Lord) with a great Reward, for a little Work. *Agrippa* having suffered imprisonment for wishing *Caius* Emperour, the first thing *Cajus* did, when he came to the Empire, was to prefer *Agrippa* to a Kingdom,

he gave him also a Chain of Gold, as heavy as the Chain of Iron that was upon him in prison; And will not Christ richly reward all his suffering Saints? Surely he will: Christ will at last pay a Christian for every prayer he hath made, for every Sermon he hath heard, for every tear he hath shed, for every morsel he hath given, for every burthen he hath born, for every battle he hath fought, for every enemy he hath slain, and for every temptation that he hath overcome.

Cyrus in a great expedition against his enemies, the better to incourage his Souldiers to fight, in an Oration that he made at the head of his Army, promised upon the victory, to make every Foot-Souldier a Horse-man, and every Horse-man a Commander, and that no Officer that did valiantly, should be unrewarded; but what are *Cyrus* his rewards, to the rewards that Christ our General promises to his? *Rev.* 3. 21. *To him that over-*

Mat.19.28
Luk.22.30
Mat.5.12

overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in thy Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. As there is no Lord to Christ, so there are no rewards to Christs, his rewards are the greatest rewards, he gives Kingdoms, Crowns, Thrones, he gives Grace and Glory, *Psalm* 48. 11.

As the King in *Plutarch* said of a groat, it is no Kingly gift, and of a Talent it is no base bribe.

It is said of *Araunah*, that noble *Jebusite*, renowned for his bounty, that he had but a Subjects purse, yet a Kings heart; but Jesus Christ hath a Kings purse, as well as a Kings heart, and accordingly he gives.

And as Christs rewards are the greatest rewards, so his rewards are the surest rewards; he is faithful that hath promised, 1 *Thes.* 5. 24.

Antiochus promised often, but seldom gave (upon which he was called in a way of derision, a great promiser) but Jesus Christ never made any promise, but he hath or will perform it, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. nay, he is often better than his word,

1 *Cor.* 2. 9. He gives many times more than we ask. The man ſick of the Palſie, asked but health, and Chriſt gave him health, and a pardon to boot. *Solomon* deſired but wiſdom, and the Lord gave him wiſdom, and honour, and riches, and the favour of Creatures, as Paper, and Pack-thread into the bargain. *Jacob* asked him but cloaths to wear, and bread to eat, and the Lord gave him theſe things; and riches and other mercies into the bargain.

Mat. 9. 2.

2 Chron. 1. 10, to 16.

Gen. 28. 20. compared with Gen. 32. 10.

Chriſt doth not meaſure his gifts by our Petitions, but by his own Riches and Mercy. Gracious ſouls many times receive many gifts and favours from God, that they never dream't of, nor durſt preſume to beg, which others exrteamly ſtrive after, and go without.

Archelaus being much importuned by a covetous Courtier for a Cup of Gold wherein he drank, gave it unto *Euripides*, that ſtood by; ſaying, Thou art worthy to ask

ask and be denyed, but *Euripides* is worthy of gifts, although he ask not.

The Prodigal craves no more but the place of a hired Servant, but he is entertained as a Son, he is clad with the best robe, and fed with the fatted Calf; he hath a Ring for his hand, and Shoos for his Feet, rich supplies, more than he desired. *Jacobs* Sons in a time of Famine, desired only Corn, and they return with Corn and Money in their Sacks, and with good news too, *Joseph* is alive, and Governour of all *Ægypt*. Luke 15. 19.---25. Gen. 42.

And as his rewards are greater and surer than other rewards, so they are more durable and lasting than other rewards; the Kingdom that he gives, is a Kingdom that shakes not; the treasures that he gives, are treasures that corrupt not; and the glory that he gives, is glory that fadeth not away; but the rewards that men give, are like themselves, fickle and unconstant, they are withering and fading. Heb. 12. 28. Matth. 6. 19, 20. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

Xerxes Crowned his Steers-man in the morning, and beheaded him in the evening of the ſame day.

And *Andronicus* the Greek Emperour Crowned his Admiral in the morning, and then took off his head in the afternoon.

Roſſenſis had a Cardinals Hat ſent him, but his head was cut off before it came to him. Moſt may ſay of their Crowns, as that King ſaid of his, O Crown! more noble than happy. It was a juſt complaint which long ago was made againſt the Heathen Gods, (*O faciles dare ſumma deos eademque tueri Difficiles*!) they could give their favourites great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the poſſeſſion of them; the world may give you great things, but the world cannot maintain you in the poſſeſſion of them; but the great things, the great rewards that Chriſt gives his, he will for ever maintain them in the poſſeſſion of them, otherwiſe Hea-

Heaven would not be Heaven, Glory would not be Glory; now by all these things you see, that it is a very great honour to be an Old Disciple, an Old Christian; and this honour you will never attain to, except you begin to be really good betimes, except in the morning of your Youth, you return to the Lord, and get an interest in him.

I shall now come to make some Use and Application of this weighty truth to our selves.

You see beloved, that it is the great Duty and Concernment of Young Men, *To be really good betimes*: If this be so; Then,

Use I.

First, This Truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such Young men, that are only seemingly good, that make some shews of goodness, but are not right to-

2 Chro. 24. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16.

ward God at the the Root.

As *Joash* when he was young, he seemed to have good things in him towards the Lord, whilst good *Jehoiada* lived, but when *Jehoiada* was dead, *Joash* his goodness was buried with him.

Nero's first five years are famous, but afterwards who more cruel?

Ah! how many in these daies that have been seemingly good, have turned to be naught, very naught, yea, stark naught?

It is said of *Tiberius*, that whilst *Augustus* ruled, he was no waies tainted in his reputation; and that whilst *Drusus* and *Germanicus* were alive, he feigned those vertues which he had not, to maintain a good opinion of himself, in the hearts of the people; but after he had got himself out of the reach of contradiction and controlment, there was no fact in which he was not faulty, no crime to which he was not accessary.

There are me that ite, that r *De-* had en e a

Oh! That this were not applicable to many young persons in these

theſe daies, who have made great ſhew, and taken upon them a great name, who have begun to out-ſhine the Stars, but are now gone out like ſo many ſnuffs, to the diſhonour of God, the reproach of the Goſpel, the grief of others, and the hazard of their own ſouls.

It was a cuſtom of old, when any were baptized, the Miniſter delivered a white Garment to be put on ſaying, Take thou this white Veſtment, and ſee thou bring it forth without ſpot, at the Judgement ſeat of Jeſus Chriſt; whereupon one *Maritta* Baptizing one *Elpidophorus*, who when he was grown up, proved a prophane wretch, he brings forth the white garment, and holding it up, ſhakes it againſt him ſaying: This Linnen garment *Elpidophorus*, ſhall accuſe thee at the coming of Chriſt, which I have kept by me as a witneſs of thy Apoſtaſie.

Crabs that go backward, are reckoned among the unclean creatures. Lev. 11. 10.

Ah! Young men and Women, your former profeſſions will be a ſad witneſs againſt you in the great

great day of our Lord Jesus, except you repent and return in good earnest to the Lord.

Prov. 14. 14.

Oh it had been better that you had never made profession, that you had never set your faces towards Heaven, that you had never pretended to God and Christ, that you had never known the way of Righteousness, than after you have known it to turn from the holy Commandment!

2 Pet. 1. 21.

Cyprian in his Sermon *de lapsis*, reporteth of divers, who forsaking the Faith, were given over to evil spirits, and died fearfully.

Oh the delusions, and the Christ-dethroning, Conscience-wasting, and Soul-undoing Opinions, and principles, that many young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to! That dreadful Scripture seems to be made good in power upon them: *All you that forsake the Lord, shall come to be ashamed, and they that depart from him, shall be written upon the dust*; to begin well, and not to proceed, is

Jer. 17. 13.

but

but to aſpire to a higher pitch, that the fall may be the more deſperate. Backſliding is a wounding ſin. You read of no arms for the back, though you do for the breaſt: He that is but ſeemingly good, will prove at laſt exceedingly bad, 2 *Tim.* 3.13. *They wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived.* Hoſ. 4.14. Eph.6.11, 18.

The wolf, though he often diſſembles, and cloſely hides his nature, yet he will one time or other ſhow himſelf to be a wolf.

In the daies of *Hadrian* the Emperour, there was one *Bencosby* who gathering a multitude of *Jews* together, called himſelf *Ben cocuba*, the Son of a Star, applying that prophecy to himſelf, *Numb.*23.17. but his mask was taken off, his Hypocriſie diſcovered, and he found to be *barchoſaba*, the Son of a Lie; this age hath afforded many ſuch Monſters, but their folly is diſcovered, and their practices abhorred. This was the Young mans commendation in the Text, *That there was found in him ſome real good* Comets make a greater blaze than fixed ſtars.

there was found in him some real good towards the Lord.

Use II.

Secondly, This truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such young men, who are so far from having good things in them towards the Lord, that they give themselves up to those youthful lusts and vanities, that are dishonouring, provoking and displeasing to the Lord; who roar and revel, and gad, and game and dice and drink and drab, and what not? these make work with a witness, for Repentance, or Hell, or the Physician of souls.

I shall but touch upon the evil of youth, and then come to that which is most intended.

CHAP. III.

The first evil that most properly attends Youth is Pride.

1 Tim. 3. 6. PRide of heart, Pride of apparel, Pride of parts; young men are

not

apt to be proud of health, ſtrength, friends, relations, wit, wealth, wiſdom: two things are very rare, the one is to ſee a Young man humble and watchful, and the other to ſee an Old man contented and chearful.

Bernard ſaith, that pride is the rich mans couſin, and experience every day ſpeaks out pride to be the Young mans couſin. God (ſaid one) had three Sons, *Lucifer*, *Adam*, and *Chriſt*, the firſt aſpired to be like God in Power, and was therefore thrown down from Heaven: The ſecond to be like him in knowledge, and was therefore deſervedly driven out of *Eden*, when young: the third did altogether imitate and follow him in his goodneſs, mercy and humility, and by ſo doing obtained an everlaſting inheritance.

Pride cannot climb ſo high, but juſtice will ſit above.

Remember this young men, and as you would get a Paradiſe, and keep a Paradiſe, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of evil.

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though he were a Dwarf, yet would be pictured tall of ſtature.

Pſaphon, a proud *Libyan*, would needs be a God, and having caught ſome birds, he taught them to ſpeak and prattle, The great God *Pſaphon*.

Menecrates, a proud Phyſician wrote thus to King *Philip*, *Menecrates* a God, to *Philip* a King.

Proud *Simon* in *Lucian*, having got a little wealth, changed his name (from *Simon* to *Simonides*) for that there were ſo many Beggars of his Kin, and ſet the houſe on fire wherein he was born, becauſe no body ſhould point at it.

Acco an old woman ſeeing her deformity in a glaſs, went mad *&c.*

What ſad evils *Pharaoh*'s pride, and *Haman*'s pride, and *Herod*'s pride, and *Belſhazzar*'s pride put them upon, I ſhall not now mention.

Ah Young men! Young men! had others a window to look into your breaſts, or did your hearts ſtand where your faces do, you would even be afraid of your ſelves,

ſelves, you would loath and abhor your ſelves.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would have God to keep houſe with you, as you would have his mind and ſecrets made known to you, as you would have Chriſt to delight in you, and the Spirit to dwell in you, as you would be honoured among Saints, attended and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble.

Tertullian's counſel to the young gallants of thoſe times was excellent; cloath your ſelves (ſaid he) with the ſilk of piety, with the ſattin of ſanctity, and with the purple of modeſty; So ſhall you have God himſelf to be your Suitor. *Tert. de Cult. fœm. cap.* 13.

2. Evil.

The ſecond Evil that youth is ſubject to, is ſenſual pleaſures and delights. Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the daies of thy youth, and walk in the waies of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes. Eccl. 11. 9 2 Sam. 13. 22---29. ἡδονὴ δέλεαρ κακῶν. Pleaſure is the habit of ſin, ſaith *Plato.*

The wiſe man by an Ironical conceſſion,

ceſſion, bids him rejoice, *&c.* ſin *&c.* Thou art wilful, & reſolved upon taking thy pleaſure, go on, take thy courſe: this he ſpeaks by way of mockage and bitter ſcoff, *&c.* but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgement. So *Samſon* made a feaſt, for ſo uſed the young men to do; the hearts of young men uſually are much given up to pleaſure. I have read of a young man, who was very much given up to pleaſures, he ſtanding by Sr. *Ambroſe*, and ſeeing his excellent death, turned to other young men by him and ſaid, Oh! that I might live with you, and die with him. Senſual pleaſures are like to thoſe Locuſts, *Rev.* 9. 7. the crowns upon whoſe heads are ſaid to be only as it were ſuch or ſuch in appearance, and like gold, but *ver.* 10. it is ſaid there were (not as it were, but) ſtings in their tails.

Jud. 14. 10

They were much out that held pleaſure to be mans *ſummum bonum.*

Senſual pleaſures are but ſeeming and appearing pleaſures, but the pains that attend them are true

true and real; he that delights in ſenſual pleaſures, ſhall find his greateſt pleaſures become his bitterеſt pains.

The Heathens looked upon the back parts of pleaſure, and ſaw it going away from them, and leaving a ſting behind.

Pleaſures paſs away as ſoon as they have wearied out the body, and leave it as a bunch of Grapes, whoſe juice hath been preſſed out; which made one to ſay (*Nulla major voluptas quam voluptatis faſtidium*) I ſee no greater pleaſure in this wourld, than the contempt of pleaſure.

Julian, though an Apoſtate, yet profeſſed, that the pleaſures of the body were far below a great ſpirit. And *Tully* ſaith, he is not worthy of the name of a man (*qui unum diem velit eſſe in voluptate*) that would entirely ſpend one whole day in pleaſures; it is better not to deſire pleaſures, than to enjoy them. I ſaid of laughter it is mad, and of mirth, what doſt Eccl. 2. 2.

doſt thou ? the interrogation bids a challenge to all the Maſters of mirth, produce any ſatisfactory fruit which it affordeth, if they could.

Xerxes being weary of all pleaſures, promiſed rewards to the inventors of new pleaſures, which being invented, he never the leſs remained unſatisfied. As a Bee flyeth from flower to flower, and is not ſatisfied, and as a ſick man removes from one bed to another, from one ſeat to another, from one Chamber to another for eaſe, and finds none: So men given up to ſenſual pleaſures, go from one pleaſure to another, but can find no content, no ſatisfaction in their pleaſures. *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* There is a curſe of unſatisfiableneſs lies upon the Creature; honours cannot ſatisfie the ambitious man, nor riches the covetous man, nor pleaſures the voluptuous man; man cannot take off the wearineſs of one pleaſure, by

Eccl. 1. 8.

by another, for after a few evaporated minutes are spent in pleasures, the body presently fails the mind, and the mind the desire, and the desire the satisfaction, and all the man.

Pleasures are *Junoes* in the pursuit, and but clouds in the enjoyment; Pleasure is a beautiful Harlot, sitting in her Chariot, whose four wheels are Pride, Gluttony, Lust and idleness; the two Horses are Prosperity and Abundance; the two Drivers are Idleness and Security; her Attendants and followers are Guilt, Grief, late Repentance (if any) and oft Death and Ruine; many great men, and many strong men, and many rich men, and many hopeful men, and many young men have come to their ends by her, but never any enjoyed full satisfaction and content in her.

Ah! Young men, Young men, avoid this Harlot, and come not near the door of her house. And for lawful pleasures, let me only say this, 'tis your wisdom only

Becanus saith, that the fruit of the tree of knowledge is sweet, but in the end it breeds *Choler*, so do worldly pleasures.

only to touch them, to taſte them and to uſe them, as *Mithridates* uſed poyſon; to fortifie your ſelves againſt caſual extremities, and maladies: When Mr. *Roger Aſcham* asked the Lady *Jane Gray*, how ſhe could loſe ſuch paſtime, her Father with the Dutcheſs being a Hunting in the Park; ſmilingly anſwered, All ſport in the Park is but a ſhadow of that pleaſure I find in this Book, having a good Book in her hand.

Auguſtine before his converſion, could not tell how to live without thoſe pleaſures which he delighted much in, but when his nature was changed, and his heart graciouſly turned to the Lord, O how ſweet (ſaith he) is it to be without thoſe former ſweet delights!

Ah! Young men, when once you come to experience the goodneſs and ſweetneſs that is in the Lord, and in his Word and Ways, you will then ſit down and grieve, that you have ſpent more Wine in the Cup, than Oyl in the Lamp.

There

There are no pleaſures ſo delighting, ſo ſatisfying, ſo raviſhing, ſo ingaging, and ſo abiding, as thoſe that ſpring from union, and communion with God, as thoſe that flow from a ſenſe of Intereſt in God, and from an humble, and a holy walking with God.

3. Evil.

The third ſin of Youth is raſhneſs. *Ariſt. Polit.*

They many times know little, and fear leſs, and ſo are apt raſhly to run on, and run out often to their hurt, but more often to their hazard. *Exhort Young men to be ſober minded, and diſcreet.* They are apt to be raſh, to be hot-ſpurs: as you may ſee in *Rehoboam*'s Young Counſellers, who counſelled him to tell the people (that groaned under their burthen) that his little finger ſhould be thicker than his Fathers loins, and that he would add to their yoak, and that where- Tit. 2. 6. 1 King. 12. 8, 9, 10, 11

whereas his Father had chaſtiſed them with Whips, he would chaſtiſe them with Scorpions; this raſh counſel proved *Rehoboam's* ruine: yea, *David* himſelf though a good man, yet being in his warm blood and young, how ſadly was he overtaken with raſhneſs? *As the Lord God of Iſrael liveth* (ſaith he) *except thou hadſt haſtened, and come to meet me, ſurely, there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morrow light, any that piſſeth againſt the Wall.* And this he binds with an Oath; becauſe the Maſter was fooliſhly wilful, the innocent ſervants muſt all be woful, and becauſe *Nabal* had been niggardly of his bread, *David* would be Prodigal of his blood.

1 Sam. 25. 34, 35. *Dis proximus ille eſt, quem ratio, non ira movet. Sen.* He is next to God, whom reaſon, not anger moveth.

Ah! how unlike a Chriſtian, yea, how below a man, doth *David* carry it, when his blood is up, and he a captive to raſhneſs, and paſſion? Raſhneſs will admit of nought for Reaſon, but what unreaſonable ſelf ſhall dictate for reaſon; as ſloth ſeldom

dom bringeth actions to good birth, ſo raſhneſs makes them alwaies abortive, e're well formed: A raſh Spirit is an ungodlike Spirit: a raſh Spirit is a weak Spirit, it is an effeminate Spirit. *A man of underſtanding, is of an excellent Spirit*, or as the Hebrew will bear it, is of a cool Spirit, not raſh and hot, ready at every turn to put out his ſoul in wrath. Raſhneſs unmans a man, it will put a man upon things below manhood. *Heroſtratus* (a hotſpur) an obſcure baſe fellow, did in one night by fire deſtroy the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, which was two hundred and twenty years in building of all *Aſia*, at the coſt of ſo many Princes, and beautified with the labour and cunning of ſo many excellent workmen. The truth is, there would be no end, ſhould I diſcover the many ſad and great evils that are uſhered into the world by that one evil raſhneſs, which uſually attends youth, *&c.* And therefore young men decline it, and arm your ſelves againſt it, *&c.* Prov. 17. 27.

4. Evil.

The fourth ſin that ordinarily attends on youth, is mocking and ſcoffing at Religious men, and religious things.

They were young ones, that ſcoffing and ſcornfully ſaid to the Prophet, *Go up thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head.* And the young men derided and mocked *Job*. *But now, they that are younger than I, have me in deriſion; whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained, to have ſet with the Dogs of my Flock. Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they raiſe up againſt me the waies of their deſtruction*, &c. And oh that this age did not afford many ſuch Monſters, who are notable, who are infamous in this black Art of ſcoffing and deriding the people of God, and the waies of God.

2 King. 2. 23, 24. Job 30. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15.

The *Athenians* once ſcoffed at *Sylla*'s wife, and it had well nigh coſt the razing of their City, he was

was ſo provoked with the indignity; and will you think it ſafe to ſcoff at the people of God, who are the Spouſe of Chriſt, who are as the Apple of the eye, who are the ſignet of his right hand, his portion, his pleaſant portion, his inheritance, his Jewel, his royal Diadem? Ah young men, young men! will you ſeriouſly conſider how ſadly and ſorely he hath puniſhed other ſcoffers and mockers? and by his Judgements on them, be warned never to ſcoff at the people of God, or his waies more. *Julian* the Emperour was a great ſcoffer of Chriſtians, but at laſt he was ſtruck with an Arrow from Heaven, that made him cry out (*Viciſti Galilæe*) thou *Galilean* (meaning our Saviour Chriſt) haſt overcome me. *Felix*, for one malicious ſcoff, did nothing day and night but vomit blood, till his unhappy ſoul was ſeparated from his wretched body. *Pherecydes* was conſumed by worms alive, for giving

Zech. 2. 1. Zech. 5. Deut. 32. 9. Iſa. 19. 25. Joel 2. 15. Pſ. 13. 12. Iſa. 26. 3.

Religion but a nick-name. *Lucian* for barking againſt Religion like a Dog, was by the juſt Judgement of God devoured by Dogs. Remember theſe dreadful Judgements of God, on ſcoffers, and if you like them, then mock on, ſcoff on, but know that juſtice will at laſt be even with you, nay above you.

5. Evil.

The fifth and laſt evil (that I ſhall mention) *that attends and waits on youth, is luſtfulneſs, and wantonneſs.*

2 Tim. 2. 12. Which occaſioned aged *Paul* to caution his young *Timothy*, to flee youthful luſts. *Timothy* was a chaſt and chaſtened piece; he was much ſanctified and mortified, his graces were high, and corruptions low; he walked up and down this World with dying thoughts, and with a weak, diſtempered, declining, dying body; his heart was in Heaven, and his foot in the Grave, and yet Youth is ſuch a ſlippery age, that *Paul* commands him to flee,

flee, to poſt from youthful luſts; though *Timothy* was a good man, a weak ſickly man, a marvellous temperate man, drinking water rather than wine, yet he was but a man, yea, a young man; and therefore *Paul's* counſel and command is, that he flee youthful luſts. And *Solomon* who had ſadly experienced the ſlipperineſs of youth, gives this counſel, *Put away the evils of thy fleſh, for childhood and youth are vanity.* He was a young man that followed the Harlot to her houſe: he was young in years and young in knowledge; (*Salazer* upon the words ſaith) that was a happy age that afforded but one ſimple young man among many, whereas late times afford greater ſtore. Ah! too many of the youths of this age, inſtead of flying from youthful luſts, they poſt and purſue after youthful luſts.

Eccl. 11. 10.

Prov. 7. 7, 8, 9, &c.

Chryſoſtome ſpeaking of youth, ſaith it is (*difficilem, jactabilem, fallibilem, vehementiſſimiſque egentem frænis*) hard to be ruled, eaſie to

Chryſoſt. Homil. 1. Ad populum.

be drawn away, apt to be deceived, and ſtanding in need of very violent reins.

Lapide. The Ancients did picture youth like a young man naked, with a veil over his face, his right hand bound behind him, his left hand looſe, and time behind him pulling one thread out of his veil every day, intimating that young men are void of knowledge, and blind, unfit to do good, ready to do evil, till time by little and little makes them wiſer. Well, young man remember this, that the leaſt ſparkling and kindling of luſts, will firſt or laſt coſt thee groans and griefs, tears, and terrours enough. Theſe five are the ſins that uſually are waiting and attending on youth, but from theſe the young man in the Text was by Grace preſerved and ſecured, which is more than I dare affirm of all into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall. But though theſe five are the ſins of youth; yet they are not all the ſins of youth, for youth

youth is capable of, and ſubject to all other ſins whatſoever, but theſe are the ſpecial ſins that moſt uſually wait and attend on young men, when they are in the ſpring and morning of their youth.

Other ſins attend youth, as 1. Ignorance. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 2. Falſhood. Pſal. 50. 3. 3. Exceſſive love of liberty. 4. Impatience of counſels and reproofs, Jer. 31. 18, 19. 5. Impudence, Iſa. 3. 5. 6. A trifling ſpirit, Eccleſ. 11. 10. 7. Prodigality. Uſe.

CHAP. IV.

I Shall now haſten to the main Uſe that I do intend to ſtand upon, and that is an Uſe of Exhortation, to all young perſons.

Ah Sirs! as you tender the glory of God, the good of your bodies, the joy of your Chriſtian friends, and the ſalvation of your own ſouls; be exhorted and perſwaded to be really good betimes. It was the praiſe and honour of *Abijah*, that there was found in him ſome good thing towards the Lord in the Primroſe of his child-hood.

Oh that it might be your honour and happineſs to be really good betimes, that it might be to you a praiſe, and a Name, that in the

morning of your youth, you have begun to ſeek the Lord, and to know and love the Lord, and to get an intereſt and propriety in the Lord: Now that this Exhortation may ſtick and take,

I beſeech you ſeriouſly to weigh and ponder theſe following Motives, or Conſiderations.

1. Motive.

Firſt conſider, *It is an honour to be good betimes.* A young Saint is like the morning Star; he is like a Pearl in a Gold Ring. It is mentioned as a ſingular honour to the believing *Jews*, that they firſt truſted in Chriſt; that we ſhould be to the praiſe of his glory, who firſt truſted in Chriſt; this was their praiſe, their crown, that they were firſt converted, and turned to Chriſt and Chriſtianity. So S. *Paul* mentioning *Andronicus* and *Junia*, doth not omit this circumſtance of praiſe and honour, that they were in Chriſt before him. Salute *Andronicus* and *Junia*, my Kinſmen, and my fellow-priſoners,

Eph. 1. 12.

Rom. 16. 7.

ners, who are of note among the Apoſtles, who alſo were in Chriſt before me.

And ſo it was the honour of the houſe of *Stephanus*, that they were the firſt fruits of *Achaia*, it was their glory, that they were the firſt that received, and welcomed the Goſpel in *Achaia*. 'Tis a greater honour for a young man to outwreſtle Sin, Satan, Temptation, the World and Luſt, than ever *Alexander* the Great could attain unto. It was *Judah* his praiſe and honour, that they were the firſt in fetching home *David* their King. 1 Cor. 16. 15. 2 Sam. 19. 15.

Ah! Young men, and women, it will be your eternal praiſe and honour, if you ſhall be before others, if you ſhall be the firſt among many, who ſhall know the Lord, and ſeek the Lord, who ſhall receive the Lord, and embrace him; who ſhall cleave to the Lord and ſerve him; who ſhall honour the Lord, and obey him; who ſhall delight in the Lord, and walk with him. The *Romans* built

Virtues and Honours Temple close together, to shew that the way to honour was by virtue; and indeed there is no Crown to that which goodness sets upon a mans head; all other honour is fading and withering. Judg.1.7. *Adonibezek*, a mighty Prince, is suddenly made fellow-commoner with the Dogs. Dan.4.28. And *Nebuchadnezzar*, a mighty Act.12. 23. Conqueror, turned a grazing among the Oxen. And *Herod* reduced from a conceited God, to be the most loathsom of men, living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures upon the suit of his affronted Creator. Esth.7.10. And *Haman* feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crows the next: I might tell you of *Bajazet*, and *Belisarius*, two of the greatest Commanders in the world, and many others who have suddenly fallen from the top of worldly honour and felicity, into the greatest contempt and misery, but I shall not at this time; But that honour that rises from mens being

ing gracious betimes is ſuch honour that the world can neither give nor take; it is honour, it is a Crown that will ſtill be green, and flouriſhing, it is honour that will bed and board with a man, that will abide with a man under all trials and changes, that will to the grave, that will to heaven with a man.

Ah Sirs! It is no ſmall honour to you, who are in the ſpring and morning of your daies, that the Lord hath left upon record ſeveral inſtances of his love and delight in young men; he choſe *David* a younger Brother, and paſſes by his elder Brothers: he frowns upon *Eſau*, and paſſes by his door, and ſets his love and delight upon *Jacob* the younger Brother, he kindly and lovingly accepts of *Abels* perſon and ſacrifice, and rejects both *Cains* perſon and ſacrifice, though he was the elder Brother. Among all the Diſciples *John* was the youngeſt, and the moſt and beſt beloved. There was

1 Sam. 16. 11, 12, 13. Rom. 9. 12, 13.

Gen. 4. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Joh. 13. 23.

was but one young man that came to Christ, and he came not aright; and all the good that was in him, was but some moral good, and yet Christ loved him, with a love of pity and compassion; the Greek word signifies, to speak friendly, and deal gently with one; and so did Christ with him, all which should exceedingly encourage young men to be good betimes, to be gracious in the morning of their youth; no way to true honour like this, but

Mar. 10. 19,20,21.

ἀγαπᾶν.

2 Motive.

Secondly, consider, *Christ loved poor sinners, and gave himself for them, when he was in the prime of his age* (being supposed to be about thirty and three) *and will you put him off with the worst of your time?*

The sacrifices in the Law were young Lambs, and young Kids, to shew that Christ our sacrifice should die and suffer for our sins, in the flower of his age.

Ah! Young men, young men, Christ gave himself up to death, he made himself an offering for your sins, for your sakes, when he was in the prime and flower of his age, and why then should you put off Christ

Chriſt to old age? Did he die for ſin in the prime of his age? and will not you die to ſin in the prime of your age? Did he offer himſelf for you in the ſpring, and morning of his years? and will not you offer up your ſelves to him in the ſpring and morning of your years? O give not Chriſt cauſe to ſay, I died for you betimes, but you have not lived to me betimes; I was early in my ſufferings for you, but you have not been early in your returning to me; I made haſte to compleat your Redemption, but you have made no haſte to make ſure your Vocation and Election; I ſtayed not, I lingred not, but ſoon ſuffered what I was to ſuffer, and quickly did what was to be done for your eternal welfare, but you have ſtayed, and lingred (like *Lot* in *Sodom*) and have not done what you might have done in order to your everlaſting good; in the Primroſe of my daies, I ſweat for you

Rom. 12. 1, 2.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Gen. 19. 16.

you, I wept for you, I bled for you, I hung upon the Croſs for you, I bore the wrath of my Father for you; but you have not in the Primroſe of your daies, ſweat under the ſenſe of Divine diſpleaſure, nor wept over your ſins, nor mourned over me, whom you have ſo often grieved and pierced; I could not be quiet nor ſatisfied till I had put you into a capacity, into a poſſibility of ſalvation, and yet you are well enough quieted and ſatisfied, though you do not know whether ever you ſhall be ſaved.

Zech. 12. 10.

Ah Sirs! how ſad would it be with you, if Jeſus Chriſt ſhould ſecretly thus expoſtulate with your conſcience in this your day!

Oh! how terrible would it be with you, if Chriſt ſhould thus viſibly plead againſt you, in his great day! Ah! Young men; young men, and women, who but ſouls much left of God, blinded by Satan, and hardened in ſin, can hear Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaking

2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

ing thus to them? I ſuffered for Sinners betimes, I laid down a ranſom for Souls betimes, I pacified my Fathers Wrath betimes, I ſatisfied my Fathers Juſtice betimes, I merited grace and mercy for ſinners betimes, I brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs upon the world betimes, *&c.* I ſay, who can hear Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaking thus, and his heart not fall in love and league with Chriſt, and his ſoul not unite to Chriſt, and reſign to Chriſt, and cleave to Chriſt, and for ever be one with Chriſt, except it be ſuch that are for ever left by Chriſt? Well, remember this, (*quanto pro nobis vilior, tanto nobis charior*) the more vile Chriſt made himſelf for us, the more dear he ought to be unto us.

Ah! Young men, remember this, when Chriſt was young, he was tempted and tryed, when he was in the morning of his daies, his wounds were deep, his burden weighty, his cup bitter, his ſweat pain-

painful, his agony and torment, above conception, beyond expreſſion; when he was young, that bleſſed head of his was crowned with thorns, and thoſe eyes of his that were purer than the Sun, were put out by the darkneſs of Death; and thoſe ears of his which now hear nothing but *Hallelujahs* of Saints and Angels, were filled with the blaſphemies of the multitude; and that bleſſed beautiful face of his, which was fairer than the Sons of men, was ſpit on by beaſtly filthy wretches; and that gracious mouth and tongue, that ſpake as never man ſpake, was ſlandered and accuſed of blaſphemy; and thoſe hands of his which healed the Sick, which gave out pardons, which ſwayed a Scepter in Heaven, and another on Earth, were nailed to the Croſs; and thoſe feet that were beautiful upon the Mountains, that brought the glad tydings of Peace and Salvation into the World, and that were like unto fine

Nolo vivere ſine vulnere, cum te video vulneratum. Bonaventer. Oh my God as long as I ſee thy wounds, I will never live without wounds. *Aut Deus naturæ patitur, aut mundi machina diſſolvitur,* ſaid *Dionyſius Alexandrinus.* Either the God of nature ſuffereth, or the frame of the world will be diſſolved.

fine braſs, were alſo nailed to the Croſs: All theſe great and ſad things did Jeſus Chriſt ſuffer for you in the prime and flower of his daies; and Oh! what an unſpeakable Provocation ſhould this be to all young ones to give up themſelves betimes to Chriſt, to ſerve, love and honour and obey him betimes, even in the ſpring and morning of their youth?

Let the thoughts of a crucified Chriſt (ſaid one) be never out of your mind; let them be meat and drink unto you, let them be your ſweetneſs and conſolation, your honey and your deſire, your reading, and your meditation, your life, death, and reſurrection.

3. Motive.

The third Motive or conſideration to provoke you to begin to be good betimes, is this, *viz.*

That it is the beſt and choiceſt way in the world, to be rich in gracious experiences betimes (which are

The Philoſopher once ſaid, *ſolus ſapiens dives*, only the wiſe man is the rich man.

are the beſt riches in all the world) as he that ſets up for himſelf betimes, is in the moſt hopeful way to be rich betimes: So he that is good in good earneſt betimes, he is in the ready way, the high-way of being rich in grace, and rich in goodneſs, they uſually prove men of great obſervation, and great experience. Pſ.63.1,2. Exod.3.3, 19,22,&c. God loves to ſhew theſe his beauty, and his glory in his Sanctuary. Pſ.65.11, 12. He delights to cauſe his glory, and his goodneſs to paſs before ſuch: theſe ſhall find all his paths drop marrow and fatneſs, for theſe the Lord of Hoſts will make a feaſt of fat things, a feaſt of Iſa.25.6. Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined: theſe ſhall have all manner of pleaſant fruits laid up at their gates for their well-beloved; Cant.7.13. none have ſo many choice pledges of Chriſts love, nor ſo many ſweet kiſſes of Chriſt's mouth, nor ſo many embraces in Chriſts arms, as thoſe ſouls that are good betimes:

betimes : O the grace, the goodneſs, the ſweetneſs, the fatneſs that Chriſt is ſtill a droping into their hearts : Chriſt will make their hearts his largeſt treaſury ; he'l lay up moſt of his heavenly treaſure in their ſouls, there he will ſtore up mercies new and old, there he will treaſure up all plenty, rarity, and variety, there he will lay up all that heart can wiſh, or need require : O the many drops of Myrrh that fall from Chriſts fingers upon their hearts ! O the many ſecrets that Chriſt reveals in their ears ! O the many Love-letters that Chriſt ſends to theſe ! O the many viſits that he gives to theſe ! O the turns, the walks that he hath in Paradiſe with theſe ! there are none in the world for experience, and intelligence to theſe. Ah ! Young men, young men, as you would be rich in the beſt riches, begin to be good betimes ; as there is no riches to ſpiritual riches, ſo there is no way

Earthly riches are full of poverty. *Divitiæ corporales paupertatis plenæ ſunt.*

way to be rich in these riches, but by beginning to be good (in good earnest) betimes.

If there were any happiness in riches, the Gods would not want them saith *Seneca.*

As for worldly riches, Philosophers have contemned them, and preferred a contemplative life above them, and shall not Christians much more? The Prophet calls them *thick clay*, which will sooner break the back, than lighten the heart; they cannot better the soul, they cannot enrich the soul. Ah! how many thredbare souls are to be found under silken cloaks and gowns? how often are worldly Riches, like Hung-men, they hide mens faces with a covering, that they may not see their own end, and then they hang them. And if they do not hang you, they will shortly leave you, they make themselves wings and fly away. When one was a commending the Riches and Wealth of Merchants; I do not love that wealth, saith a Heathen that hangs upon Ropes, if they break the Ship miscarrieth,

and

and all is loſt. He is rich enough (ſaith St. *Jerome*) that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity, that is not forced to ſerve.

This worlds wealth that men ſo much deſire,
May well be likn'd to a burning fire,
whereof a little can do little harm,
But profit much our bodies well to warm:
But take too much, and ſurely thou ſhalt burn;
So too much wealth, to too much wo does
(turn.

It was an excellent ſaying of *Lewes* of *Bavyer*, Emperour of *Germany* (*hujuſmodi comparandæ ſunt opes, quæ cum naufrago ſimul enatent*) ſuch goods are worth getting and owning, as will not ſink or waſh away, if a Shipwrack happen, but will wade and ſwim out with us; we ſee ſuch are the ſpiritual riches that will attend thoſe, who in the ſpring and morning of their youth, ſhall know the Lord, and ſerve the Lord, and get an intereſt in the Lord; and thus much for the third Motive.

The

4. Motive.

The fourth Motive to provoke young ones to be really good betimes, is to consider, that *The present time, the present day is the only season that you are sure of.*

Time past cannot be recalled, and time to come cannot be ascertained. *To day if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts.* Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; some there be that trifle away their time, and fool away their souls, and their salvation; to prevent this, the Apostle beats upon the Τὰ νῦν, the present opportunity, because, if that be once past, there is no recovering of it; therefore as the Marriner takes the first fair wind to sail; and as the Merchant takes his first opportunity of buying and selling: and as the Husbandman takes the first opportunity of sowing and reaping; so should young men take the present season, the present day (which is their day) to be good towards

Heb. 3. 15.

2 Cor. 6. 2.

The whole Earth hangs on a point, so doth Heaven and Eternity on an inch of opportunity.

wards the Lord, to ſeek him, and ſerve him, and not to poſt off the preſent ſeaſon, for they know not what another day, another hour, another moment may bring forth: that Door of Grace that is open to day, may be ſhut to morrow: that golden Scepter of mercy that is held forth in the Goſpel this day, may be taken in the next day; that love that this hour is upon the bare knee intreating and beſeeching young men to break off their ſins by repentance, to return to the Lord, to lay hold on his ſtrength, and be at peace with him, may the next hour be turned into wrath.

Ah! the noble motions that have been loſt, the good purpoſes that have withered, the immortal Souls that have miſcarried, by putting off the preſent ſeaſon, the preſent day. St. *Paul* diſcourſing before *Felix* of Righteouſneſs, and Temperance, and Judgement to come, and in this diſcourſe ſtriking at two ſpecial vices

Iſa. 27 4,5.

Act. 24. 25

vices that *Felix* was particularly guilty of, he falls a trembling; and being upon the rack to hear ſuch Doctrine, he bids Saint *Paul* depart for that time, and he would call for him at a convenient ſeaſon; here *Felix* neglects his preſent ſeaſon, and we never read, that ever after this, he found a convenient time or ſeaſon to hear Saint *Paul* make an end of the ſubject he had begun! So Chriſt made a very fair offer to the Young man in the Goſpel, *Go and ſell all that thou haſt, and give to the Poor, and thou ſhalt have Treaſure in Heaven*; here Chriſt offers heavenly treaſures, for earthly treaſures; unmixt treaſures, for mixt treaſures; perfect treaſures for imperfect treaſures; ſatisfying treaſures, for unſatisfying treaſures; laſting treaſures, for fading treaſures; but the young man ſlips his opportunity, his ſeaſon, and goes away ſorrowful, and we never read more of him.

Mark 12. 22,23,24.

Ah! Young men, young men, do

do not put off the preſent ſeaſon, do not neglect the preſent day, there is no time yours, but the preſent time; no day yours, but the preſent day; and therefore do not pleaſe your ſelves, and feed your ſelves with hopes of time to come, and that you will repent, but not yet; and lay hold on mercy, but not yet; and give up your ſelves to the Lord next week, next month, or next year; for that God that hath promiſed you mercy and favour, upon the day of your return, he hath not promiſed to prolong your lives, till that day comes. When a Souldier was brought before *Lamachus*, a Commander, for a miſ-behaviour, and pleaded he would do ſo no more, *Lamachus* anſwered (*non licet in bello bis peccare*) no man muſt offend twice in War: So God (eſpecially in theſe Goſpel-daies, wherein the motions of Divine Juſtice are more ſmart and quick, than in former daies) haply will not

Often conſider what the damned would give (were it in their hands) for one ſeaſon of Grace, for one opportunity of Mercy.

Heb.3.2. suffer men twice to neglect the day of grace, and let slip the season of mercy.

Ah! Young men, young men, you say you will be good towards the Lord before you die, but if you are not good towards the Lord to day, you may die to morrow; nay justice may leave him to be his own executioner to morrow, who will not repent, nor seek the Lord to day. I have read of a certain young man, who being admonished of the evil of his way and course, and pressed to leave his wickedness, by the consideration of Death, Judgement, and Eternity, which was a coming, he answered, what do you tell me of these things, I will do well enough, for when Death comes, I will speak but three words, and will help all; and so still he went on in his sinful ways, but in the end coming to a Bridge on Horseback, to go over a deep water, the Horse stumbling, and he labouring to recover his Horse,

but

but could not, at laſt he lets go the bridle, and gave up himſelf and Horſe to the waters, and was heard to ſay theſe three words, *Devil take all.* Here were three dreadful words indeed, and an example (with a witneſs) for all young men to beware, who think to repent with a three word repentance at laſt.

Diabolus capiat omnia.

Otho, the Emperour, ſlew himſelf with his own hands, but ſlept ſo ſoundly the night before, that the Grooms of his Chamber heard him ſnort.

Young men, I will ſuppoſe you to be good accomptants; now if you pleaſe to count the number, and mark the age of the Sacrifices in the Old Teſtament, and you ſhall find more Kids, and Lambs offered, than Goats, and old Sheep: You have no leaſe of your lives, you are not ſure that you ſhall live to *Iſaac*'s age, to live till your eyes wax dim; you are not ſure that you ſhall live to *Jacob*'s years, and die, leaning upon

Plutarch reporteth the like of *Cato.*

Gen. 17. 1.

Heb. 11. 21.

Job 36. 14.

As out of the bough of a tree are taken wedges to cleave it in pieces, ſo out of our own luſts are taken Engines to deſtroy us,

on the top of a ſtaff. You read of them who die in their youth, and whoſe lives are among the unclean. Slip not the preſent ſeaſon, neglect not this day of grace, let not Satan keep your ſouls and Chriſt any longer aſunder, by telling of you, that you are too young, that hereafter will be time enough. St. *Auſtine* tells us, that by this very temptation, the Devil kept him off from receiving of Chriſt, from cloſing with Chriſt, ſeven years together; he could no ſooner think of inquiring after Chriſt, of getting an intereſt in Chriſt, of leaving off his ſinful courſes, *&c.* but Satan would be ſtill a ſuggeſting, thou art too young to leave thy drunkenneſs, thou art too young to leave thy *Dalilahs*, to leave thy Harlots, till at laſt he cryed out, how long ſhall I ſay, it is too ſoon? Why may I not repent to day? and lay hold on Jeſus Chriſt to day? *&c.* Ah young men! this is your day, this

this is your ſeaſon, if you will not now hearken and obey, you may periſh for ever. *Cæſar* had a Letter given him by *Artemidorus*, that morning he went to the Senate, wherein notice was given him of all the conſpiracy of his murtherers; ſo that with eaſe he might have prevented his death, but neglecting the reading of it was ſlain, he ſlipt his ſeaſon, and dies for it. Ah! how many for ſlipping gracious ſeaſons and opportunities, have dyed for ever? Soul opportunities are more worth than a thouſand Worlds; mercy is in them, grace and glory is in them, Heaven and Eternity is in them.

5. Motive.

Fifthly, To provoke you to be good betimes; Conſider,

How juſt it is with God to reſerve the dregs of his wrath for them, who reſerve the dregs of their daies for him.

How can a Husband imbrace that Wife in her old age, who hath ſpent all the time of her youth in following after ſtrangers? Will any man receive ſuch into his ſervice, who have all their daies ſerved his enemies, and received ſuch wounds, blows, and bruiſes, that render them unfit for his ſervice?

Deut. 32. 6. Ah! Young men, young men, *do not thus fooliſhly and unwiſely requite the Lord*, for all his patient waiting, his gracious wooing, and his merciful dealing with you. Ah! do not put off God to old age; for old, lame, and ſick Sacrifices rarely reach as high as Heaven. Is not old age very unteachable? in old age are not men very unapt to take in, and as unapt to give out? In old age (oftentimes) men are men, and no men, they have eyes, but ſee not; ears, but hear not; tongues, but ſpeak not; feet, but walk not. An aged man is but a moving Anatomy, or a living mortuary; now how unlovely, how uncomely, how unwor-

Multa ſenem circumveniunt in commoda, Horatius. Many are the inconveniencies that do encompaſs an old man.

unworthy, nay, how incenſing, how provoking a thing muſt this needs be, when men will dally with God, and put him off till their doting daies have overtaken them, till their ſpring is paſt, their ſummer over-paſt, and they arrived at the fall of the leaf, yea till winter-colours have ſtained their heads with gray and hoary hairs? How provoking this is, you may ſee in thoſe ſad words of *Jeremiah*, Jer. 22. 21, 22. *I ſpake unto thee in thy proſperity, but thou ſaidſt I will not hear, this hath been thy manner from thy youth, and thou obeyeſt not my voice:* But will God put up this at their hands? no, therefore it follows in the next verſe, *Surely thou ſhalt be aſhamed and confounded for all thy wickedneſs.*

Oh that Young men would let this Scripture lie warm every morning upon their hearts, that ſo they may not dare to put off God, and provoke him to their own confuſion! though you are young, and in your ſtrength,

The reproach of the evil of wickedneſs is not to be added to old age. (*Solet enim ſenectus eſſe deformis, infirma, obliviosa, edentula, lucroſa, indocilis & moleſta*) ſaith *Plutarch*, in *Apothegm. Rem.* For old age uſeth to be deformed, weak, forgetful, toothleſs, covetous, unteachable, unquiet.

yet are you ſtronger than God? can you make your party good with him? if you muſt needs be a provoking, provoke them that are your matches, and do not contend with him that is mightier than you, that can command you into nothing, or into Hell at pleaſure.

6. Motive.

Sixthly, Conſider, *That the ſooner you are good on earth, the greater will your reward be in* Heaven.

The ſooner you are gracious, the more at laſt you will be glorious. You read in the Scripture of a reward, of a great reward, and of a full reward; now, *thoſe that are good betimes*, that know, ſeek, ſerve, and love the Lord, in the ſpring and morning of their youth, they are in the faireſt way of gaining the greateſt, and the fulleſt reward.

Pſal 58.11
Gen.15.1.
Pſal.19.11
Mat. 5.12.
Heb.10. 35.
John 2.8.

And this I ſhall make clear, by that which follows.

Firſt, the ſooner any man begins to be really good, the more

more good he will do in this World. Now the more good any man doth on earth, the more glory he ſhall have in Heaven. Therefore my beloved Brethren, *Be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Mans wages, mans reward, ſhall be according to his works; he that doth moſt work here, ſhall have moſt reward hereafter.

God will at laſt proportion the one to the other, the reward to the work; *He which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly, and he which ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully.* Though no man ſhall be rewarded for his works, yet God will at laſt meaſure out happineſs and bleſſedneſs to his people, according to their ſervice, faithfulneſs, diligence, and work in this world. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full; glory is nothing elſe but a bright conſtellation of graces, Cor. 9. Rom. 2. 5, 6, 7.

happineſs, nothing but the quinteſſence of holineſs. Grace and Glory differ (*non ſpecie ſed gradu*) in degree, not kind, as the learned ſpeak. Grace and Glory differ very little, the one is the ſeed, the other is the flower; Grace is Glory militant, and Glory is Grace triumphant; and a man may as well plead for equal degrees of Grace in this World, as he may plead for equal degrees of Glory in the other World. Surely the more grace here, the more glory hereafter, and the more work Chriſtians do on earth, the more glory they ſhall have in Heaven; and the ſooner men begin to be good, the more good they will do in this world; and the more they do here, the more they ſhall have hereafter. Philoſophers ſeem to weigh our vertues with our vices, and according to the preponderation of either, denominate us good or bad, and ſo deliver us up to reward or puniſhment.

No

No man can commend good works magnificently enough (saith *Luther*) for one work of a Christian is more precious than Heaven and Earth, and therefore all the world cannot sufficiently reward one good work. And in another place saith the same Author, if I might have my desire, I would rather chuse the meanest work of a Country Christian (or poor Maid) than all the victories and triumphs of *Alexander* the Great, and of *Julius Cæsar*.

And again, Whatsoever the Saints do, though never so small and mean, it is great and glorious, because they do all in Faith, and by the Word, saith the same Author. To prevent mistakes, you must remember, that the works that Jesus Christ will reward at last, are supernatural works: they are 1. Works of God. 2. Wrought from God. 3. For God. 4. In God. 5. According to God; they are works that flow from supernatural Principles, and they

they are directed to ſupernatural ends, and performed in a ſupernatural way; now the ſooner a man begins to be good, the more he will abound in theſe good works, and the more doubtleſs any man abounds in ſuch good works on earth, the greater reward he ſhall have in Heaven; yet it muſt not be forgotten, that the beſt actions, the beſt works of Hypocrites, and all men out of Chriſt, are but (*ſplendida peccata*) fair and ſhining ſins, beautiful abominations. And as the *Phœnix* in *Arabia* gathers ſweet odoriferous ſticks together, and then blows them with her wings, and burns her ſelf with them: ſo many a carnal Profeſſor burns himſelf with his own good works, that is, by his expecting and truſting to receive that by his works, that is only to be received and expected from Jeſus Chriſt. Though all that men can do towards the meriting of Heaven, is no more than the lifting up of

David made uſe of his bow, but did not truſt to his bow. The Dove made uſe of her wings, but did not truſt in her wings, but in the Ark.

of a ſtraw towards the meriting of a Kingdom; yet ſuch a proud piece man is, that he is ready enough to ſay with proud *Vega*, (*Cœlum gratis non accipiam*) I will not have Heaven of freecoſt. A proud heart would fain have that of debt, which is meerly of grace, and deſires that to be of purchaſe, which God hath intended to be of free mercy, which made one to ſay, that he would ſwim through a Sea of Brimſtone, that he might come to Heaven at the laſt: but he that ſwims not thither through the Sea of Chriſts blood, ſhall never come there; man muſt ſwim thither, not through brimſtone, but through blood, or he miſcarries for ever.

Merces non eſt debita ſed gratuita.

Secondly, Again, the ſooner a man begins to be good, the more ſerviceable he will be to others, and the more he will provoke others to good; now all the good that you provoke others to, by Counſel, or Carriage, ſhall be put

put down to your account (as all the ſins that men provoke others to are put down to their accounts: *David* did but ſend a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*, and the charge cometh, *Thou haſt ſlain Uriah with the Sword*) the more I ſtir up others to ſow, the more at laſt I ſhall reap; the ſooner a man begins to be good, the more good he will do, the more ſerviceable he will be in the Town or City where he dwells, in the Family where he lives, among his Relations (Wife, Children, Kindred, Servants, *&c.*) with whom he converſes.

2 Sam. 12. 8, 9. Iſa. 38. 3. Neh. 13. 14.

Syneſius ſpeaks of ſome, who having a treaſure of rare abilities in them, would as ſoon part with their hearts, as their conceptions; but ſuch are rather monſters than men.

The ſooner a man begins to be gracious, the ſooner and the more uſeful will his arts, his parts, his gifts, his graces, his mercies, his experiences, his life, his labours, his prayers, his counſels, his example be, to all that are with him, to all that are about him.

Lilmod Leilammed, we therefore learn

learn that we may teach, is a Proverb among the *Rabbins*. And I do therefore lay in, and lay up (saith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many.

Ah! Young men, Young men, as you would be useful and serviceable to many, begin to be good betimes, and to lay in, and lay up, and lay out betimes, for the profit and advantage of others. *Augustine* accounted nothing his own, that he did not communicate to others. The Bee doth store her Hive out of all sorts of Flowers, for the common benefit. 'Tis a base and unworthy spirit, for a man to make himself the centre of all his actions. The very Heathen man could say, that a mans Countrey, and his Friends, and others challenge a great part of him: And indeed the best way to do our selves good, is to be a doing good to others; the best way to gather, is to scatter. Memorable

morable is that ſtory of *Pyrhias*, a Merchant of *Ithaca*, who at Sea eſpying an ancient man a Captive in a Pirates ſhip, took compaſſion on him, and redeemed him; and bought his Commodities which the Pirates had taken from him, which were certain barrels of Pitch. The old man perceiving, that not for any good ſervice he could do him, nor for the gain of that commodity, but meerly out of charity and pity he had done this, diſcovered a great maſs of treaſure hidden in the Pitch, whereby the Merchant in a very ſhort time became very rich, at which very time God made that word good; *He that ſoweth liberally, ſhall reap liberally*; and that word, *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat*; and that word, *The liberal deviſeth liberal things; and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand.* It is fabled of *Midas*, that whatever he touched, he turned into Gold: It is certain that a liberal hand, a liberal heart turns all into Gold, into gain,

2 Cor. 9. 6.

Prov. 11. 25.

Iſa. 32. 8.

gain, as Scripture and Experience do abundantly evidence. Now if you put all these things together, nothing is more evident, than that those that begin to be good betimes, are in the ready way, the high-way to be high in Heaven, when they shall cease from breathing on earth. And therefore young men, as you would be high in Heaven, as you would have a great reward, a full reward, a massie weighty Crown, O labour to be good betimes! labour to get acquaintance with the Lord, and an interest in the Lord, in the spring and morning of your daies.

7. Motive.

The seventh Motive, or Consideration to provoke and incite you to be good betimes, is, *To consider that the Lord is very much affected, and taken with your seeking of him, and following after him in the spring and morning of your youth.*

Go

Jer. 2. 2. Go and cry in the ears of *Jeruſalem*, ſaying, *I remember thee, the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thine eſpouſals, when thou wenteſt after me in the Wilderneſs, in a Land that was not ſown.*

Ah! how kindly, how ſweetly did the Lord take this at their hands, that they followed him in their youth; while their bones were full of marrow, while they were ſtrong and fit for ſervice, while nature was freſh, lively, and vigorous; In the Law, God called for the firſt of all things; he required not only the firſt fruits, but the very firſt of the firſt: The firſt of the firſt fruits of thy Land, *Thou ſhalt bring into the Houſe of the Lord thy God.* God is the firſt being, the firſt good, and therefore deſerves the firſt of the firſt, and the beſt of the beſt, the firſt and the beſt is not too good for him, who is goodneſs it ſelf. God, in that of *Levit.* 2. 14. is ſo paſſionately ſet upon having the firſt of the firſt, that he will not

Exod. 23. 19.

'Tis truly ſaid of God, that he is *Omnia ſuper omnia.*

not ſtay till the green ears of Corn be ripe, but will have the green ears of Corn dryed in the fire, leſt he ſhould loſe his longing.

As many young women, and ſickly children, cannot ſtay till the fruit be ripe, but muſt have it while it is green; even ſo ſaith God, my heart, my deſires are ſo vehemently ſet upon the firſt fruits, the firſt things, that I cannot ſtay, I cannot ſatisfie my ſelf without them; and what would God teach us by all this, but to ſerve him with the firſt fruits of our age, the primroſe of our Child-hood, the morning of our youth? God hath given you of the beſt, do not put him off with the worſt, with the worſt of your time, the worſt of your daies, the worſt of your ſtrength, leſt he ſwear in his wrath, that you ſhall never enter into his reſt.

8. Motive.

The eighth Motive or Conſideration to provoke you to be good

Early Converts will never have cauſe to ſay, as that deſparing Pope ſaid, the Croſs could do him no good, he had ſo often ſold it away.

good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the morning of your youth, is to conſider that *This may be a ſpecial means to prevent many black temptations, and an incouragement to withſtand all temptations, that you may meet with from a tempting Devil, and a tempting World.*

An early turning to the Lord, will prevent many temptations to deſpair, many temptations to neglect the means openly, to deſpiſe the means ſecretly: many temptations about the being of God, the goodneſs, faithfulneſs, truth and juſtice of God; temptations to deſpair, temptations to lay violent hands on a mans ſelf; temptations to queſtion all that God hath ſaid, and that Chriſt hath ſuffered, ariſes many times from mens delaying and putting off God to the laſt; all which, with many others, are prevented by a mans ſeeking and ſerving of the Lord in the ſpring and morning of his youth. It is reported of the Harts of *Scythia*,

thia, that they teach their young ones to leap from Bank to Bank, from Rock to Rock, from one Turf to another (by leaping before them) by which means, when they are hunted, no beaſt of prey can overtake them; ſo when perſons exerciſe themſelves in Godlineſs, when they are young, when they leap from one meaſure of holineſs to another, when they are in the morning of their daies, Satan, that mighty Hunter after Souls may purſue them with his temptations, but he ſhall not overtake them, he ſhall not prevail over them. As you ſee in *Moſes*, *Joſeph*, *Daniel*, and the three Children: theſe knew the Lord, and gave up themſelves to the Lord in the prime and Primroſe of their youth, and theſe were all temptation-proof; Satan and the World purſued them, but could not overtake them; when the Devil and the World had done their worſt, the young mens Bows abode

Heb. 11. Gen. 39. Dan. 3. *ult.*

abode in ſtrength, and their hands (to reſiſt) were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. *Ego non ſum Ego*, ſaid that young Convert, when tempted, I am not the man that I was.

Gen. 49. 23, 24.

Luther tells of a young Virgin, that uſed to reſiſt all temptations, with this, *Chriſtiana ſum*, I am a Chriſtian. Early Converts may ſay, when tempted, as he, tell me not Satan what I have been, but what I am, and will be; or as he in the like caſe, whatſoever I was I am now in Chriſt, a new Creature, and that is it which troubleth thee; or as he, the more deſperate my diſeaſe was, the more I admire the Phyſician. Yea, thou maiſt yet ſtrain it a peg higher, and ſay, the greater my ſins were, the greater is my honour. As the Devils which once *Mary Magdalen* had, are mentioned for her glory. When *Pyrrhus* tempted *Fabricius* the firſt day with an Elephant, ſo huge and monſtrous a beaſt, as before he had not ſeen,

Bernard. Beza. Auguſtin. Such as thou art now, I was once, but ſuch as I am now, thou wilt never be, ſaid *Diogenes* to a baſe fellow that told him, he had once been a forger of money.

ſeen, the next day with money and promiſes of honour; he anſwered, I fear not thy force, I am too wiſe for thy fraud.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would be free from the ſaddeſt and darkeſt temptations; and as you would be armed againſt all temptations, O labour as for life, to be good betimes! ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the morning of your youth; no way like this for the preventing Earthquakes, Heartquakes, ſtormy daies, and winter nights, *&c.*

9. Motive.

The ninth Motive or Conſideration to ſtir up young men to be good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of their youth, is, *To conſider the worth and excellency of Souls.*

A Soul is a ſpiritual immortal ſubſtance; it is capable of the knowledge of God, it is capable of union with God, of communion

Luk.23.13
Mat.19.28
Acts7. *ult.*

Phil.1.23. nion with God, and of a bleſſed and happy fruition of God.

Chriſt left his Fathers boſom for the good of ſouls; he aſſumed
Heb.2.13, 14,15, 16. mans nature for the ſalvation of mans Soul; Chriſt prayed for Souls, he ſweat for Souls, he wept for ſouls, he bled for ſouls, he hung on the Croſs for
Iſa.63.3, 4. ſouls, he trod the Wine-Preſs of his Fathers Wrath for Souls, he dyed for Souls, he roſe again from Death for Souls, he aſcended for Souls, he intercedes for Souls, and all the Glorious preparations that
Joh.14.1, 2,3. he hath been a making in Heaven theſe ſixteen hundred years, is for Souls.

Ah! Young men, young men, do not play the Courtier with your precious Souls; the Courtier doth all things late, he riſes late, dines late, ſups late, goes to bed late, repents late.

Ah Sirs! the goods of your Souls is before all, and above all other things in the World, to

fir.

first regarded and provided for, and that partly, because it is the best and more noble part of man, and partly because therein mostly and properly is the Image of God stampt, and partly because it is the first converted, and partly because it shall be the first and most glorified.

O anima Dei insigniita imagine, desponsata fide, donata spiritu! Bern.

Ah! Young men, young men, if they be worse than Infidels, that make no provision for their Families, what monsters are they that make not provision for their own souls? this will be bitterness in the end. 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Cæsar Borgias being sick to death, lamenting said, When I lived, I provided for every thing but death; now I must die, and am unprovided to die; this was a Dart at his heart, and it will at last be a Dagger at yours, who feast your bodies, but starve your souls, who make liberal provision for your ignoble part, but no provision for your more noble part.

en,

n to a reckon

If they deſerve a hanging, who feaſt their Slaves, and ſtarve their Wives, that make proviſion for their enemies, but none for their friends; how will you eſcape hanging in Hell, who make proviſion for every thing, yea, for your very luſts, but make no proviſion for your immortal Souls? We hate the *Turk*, for ſelling Chriſtians for ſlaves, and what ſhall we think then of thoſe who ſell themſelves, their precious Souls, for toys and trifles that cannot profit, who practically ſay, what once a prophane Nobleman of *Naples* verbally ſaid, *viz.* That he had two ſouls in his body, one for God, and another for whoſoever would buy it.

Jam. 4. Hoſ. 7. 2, 3, 13.

Callenucens relates this ſtory.

Ah! Young men, young men, do not pawn your ſouls, do not ſell your ſouls, do not exchange away your ſouls, do not trifle and fool away your pretious ſouls, they are Jewels, more worth than a thouſand worlds, yea, than heaven and earth; if they are ſafe, all is ſafe, but if they are loſt, to

fir

loſt, God loſt, and Chriſt loſt, and the ſociety of glorious Angels and bleſſed Saints loſt, and Heaven loſt, and that for ever. *Granatenſis* tells of a Woman that was ſo affected with ſouls miſcarrying, that ſhe beſought God to ſtop up the paſſage into Hell with her ſoul and body, that none might have entrance.

Ah! that all young perſons were ſo affected with the worth and excellency of their ſouls, and ſo alarmed with the hazard and danger of loſing their ſouls, as that they may in the ſpring and morning of their daies, enquire after the Lord, and ſeek him, and ſerve him with all their might, that ſo their precious and immortal ſouls may be ſafe and happy for ever; but if all this will not do, then in the laſt place,

10. Motive.

Tenthly, Conſider, Young men, *That God will at laſt bring them to a reckoning*; He will at

Eccl. 11. 9. last bring you to Judgement, *Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the daies of thy youth, and walk in the waies of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee unto Judgement.* In theſe words you have two things: Firſt, an Ironical conceſſion, he bids him rejoice, *&c.* he yields him what he would have by an Irony, by way of mockage and bitter ſcoff. Now thou art young, and ſtrong, lively and luſty, and thy bones are full of marrow; thou art reſolved to be proud, and ſcornful, to indulge the fleſh, and to follow thy delights and pleaſures well, take thy courſe if thou dareſt; or if thou haſt a mind to it, thy heart be ſo ſet upon it, *Rejoice in thy youth*, &c. The Second is a commination, or a ſtrict and ſevere premonition. But know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee unto judgement; will bring thee to the

Hierom ſtill thought, that that noiſe was in his ears (*Surgite mortui, & venite ad judicium*) ariſe you dead, and come to Judgement.

these words import two things; first, the unwillingness of youth to come to Judgement; secondly, the unavoidableness, that youth must come to Judgement; but how soon you shall be brought to Judgement, is only known to God.

St. *Augustine* confesses in one of his Books, that as long as his Conscience was gnawed with the guilt of some youthful lust he was once insnared with, the very hearing of a day of Judgement, was even a Hell to him.

Histories tell us of a young man, who being for some Capital offence condemned to die; grew gray in one nights space; and was therefore pitied, and spared.

Ah! Young men, young men, that the serious thoughts of this great day, may put you upon breaking off the sins of your youth; and the dedicating of your selves to the Knowledge, Love, and Service of the Lord, in

the ſpring and flower of your days. Ah! young men, conſider the errurs of your lives, the wickedneſs of your hearts, the ſinfulneſs of your waies, and that ſtrict account that e're long you muſt be brought to, before the Judge of all the World.

The Heathens themſelves had ſome kind of dread and expectation of ſuch a day; and therefore when S. *Paul* ſpake of Judgement to come, *Felix* trembled, though a Heathen.

Act. 24. 25. The Philoſophers had ſome dreams of a ſevere day of account, as appeareth by *Plato's Gorgi*, and many paſſages in *Tully*, &c.

The bringing into Judgement is a thing which is known by reaſon, and is clear by the light of Nature; Wherefore in *Auſtria* one of the Nobles dying, who had lived fourſcore and thirteen years, and had ſpent all his life in pleaſures and delights, never being troubled with any infirmity, and this being told to *Frederick* the Emperour; from hence, ſaith he, we may conclude, the ſouls immortality; for if there be a God that

that ruleth this world (as Divines and Philoſophers do teach) and that he is juſt no one denyeth; ſurely there are other places to which ſouls after death do go, and do receive for their deeds, either reward or puniſhment, for here we ſee that neither rewards are given to the good, nor puniſhment to the evil. *Æneas Sylvius.*

Ah! Young men, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, and the terror of this day, Oh! that you would be perſuaded to flee from the wrath to come; to caſt away the Idols of your ſouls, to repent and be converted in the Primroſe of your youth, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord; or elſe wo, wo to you that ever you were born. 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. Act. 3. 19.

I have read a Story of one; who being riſen from the dead, and being asked in what condition he was, he made anſwer, no man doth believe, no man doth be-

believe, no man doth believe. And being further asked what he meant by that repetition, he anſwered, no man doth believe how exactly God examineth, how ſtrictly God judgeth, how ſeverely he puniſheth. Oh! that the waies of moſt young perſons did not declare to all the world that they do not, that they will not believe the dread, and terrour of that day, that will admit of no Plea, nor place for Apology or Appeal: the higheſt and laſt Tribunal can never be appealed from, or repealed.

The *Turks* have a tradition, and frantick opinion, that wicked men ſhall at the great day carry their ſins in ſatchels after their Captain *Cain*, but well would it be for them, if this ſhould be all their puniſhment in that great day.

Now if for all that hath been ſaid, you are reſolved to ſpend the flower of your daies, and the prime of your ſtrength, in the ſervice of ſin and the world, then know that no tongue can expreſs, no heart can conceive, that trouble of mind, that terrour of ſoul, that horrour of conſcience, that fear and amazement, that weeping and wailing, that crying and roaring, that ſighing and groaning that

that curſing and banning, that ſtamping and tearing, that wringing of hands, and gnaſhing of teeth, that certainly ſhall attend you, when God ſhall bring you into Judgement for all your looſneſs, and lightneſs, for all your wickedneſs and wantonneſs, for all your prophaneneſs and baſeneſs, for all your neglect of God, your grieveing the Comforter, your trampling under foot the blood of a Saviour, for your deſpiſing of the means, for your prizing Earth above Heaven, and the pleaſures of this World, above the pleaſures that be at Gods right Hand.

Oh! how will you wiſh in that day, when your ſins ſhall be charged on you, when Juſtice ſhall be armed againſt you, when Conſcience ſhall be gnawing within you, when the World ſhall be a flaming Fire about you, when the Gates of Heaven ſhall be ſhut againſt you, and the flames of Hell ready to take hold of you, when

St. *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaking of this day, ſaith, for Chriſt this day to ſay depart from me, is a thing more terrible than a thouſand Hells. *Chry. Hom. ad Pop. Antioch.*

Angels and Saints ſhall ſit in Judgement upon you, and for ever turn their faces from you when evil ſpirits ſhall be terrifying of you, and Jeſus Chriſt for ever diſowning of you; how will you (I ſay) wiſh in that day, that you had never been born, or that you might now be unborn, or that your Mothers Wombs had proved your Tombs? O how will you then wiſh to be turn'd into a bird, a beaſt, a ſtock, a ſtone, a toad, a tree! Oh that our immortal ſouls were mortal! O that we were nothing! O that we were any thing but what we are!

John Damaſc. & Author Anonym. de quat. Noviſſ. Imp. eſſ. Daven. Ann. 1494.

I have read a remarkable ſtory of a King that was heavy, and ſad, and wept, which when his Brother ſaw, he asked him why he was ſo penſive? Becauſe (ſaith he) I have judged others, and now I muſt be judged my ſelf: And why (ſaith his Brother) do you ſo take on for this, it will (haply) be a long time ere that day come, and beſides, that is but a ſlight matter.

ter. The King ſaid little to it for the preſent.

Now it was a cuſtom in that Country, when any had committed Treaſon, there was a Trumpet ſounded at his door in the night time, and he was next day brought out to be executed; now the King commanded a Trumpet to be ſounded at his Brothers door in the night time, who awakening out of his ſleep, when he heard it aroſe, and came quaking, and trembling to the King., How now ſaid the King? what's the matter you are ſo affrighted? I am, ſaid, he attached of Treaſon, and next morning I ſhall be executed; Why, ſaith the King to him again, are you ſo troubled at that, knowing that you ſhall be judged by your Brother, and for a matter that your Conſcience tells you, you are clear of? How much more therefore may I be afraid, ſeeing that God ſhall judge me, and not in a matter that my Conſcience frees me

of

of, but of that whereof I am guilty? and beſides this, if the worſt come, it is but a temporary death you ſhall die, but I am liable to death eternal, both of the body and ſoul. I will leave the Application to thoſe young perſons that put this day afar off, and whom no arguments will move to be good betimes, and to acquaint themſelves with the Lord in the morning of their youth.

But now to thoſe young men and women, who begin to ſeek, ſerve, and love the Lord in the Primroſe of their daies, the day of judgement will be to them, (*melodia in aure, jubilum in corde*) like muſick in the ear, and a Jubilee in the heart, this day will be to them, a day of Refreſhing, a day of Redemption, a day of Vindication, a day of Coronation, a day of Conſolation, a day of Salvation, it will be to them a Marriage day, a Harveſt day, a Pay day: Now the Lord will pay them for all the prayers they have

Acts 3.19. 20,21,22. Mic.7. 7, 8,9,10, 11. Rev. 19.6, 7,8,9,10. Mat.25.34 & ver. 41.

have made, for all the Sermons they have heard, for all the tears they have ſhed: in this great day Chriſt will remember all the individual Offices of Love and Friendſhip, ſhewed to any of his; now he will mention many things for their honour and comfort, that they never minded; now the leaſt and loweſt acts of Love and Pity towards his, ſhall be interpreted as a ſpecial kindneſs ſhewed to himſelf. Now the Crown ſhall be ſet upon their heads, and the Royal Robe put upon their backs, now all the World ſhall ſee that they have not ſerved the Lord for nought: Now Chriſt will paſs over all their weakneſſes, and make honourable mention of all the Services they have performed, of all the mercies they have improved, and of all the great things that for his Name and Glory they have ſuffered.

2 Tim. 4. 8. Mal. 3. 17, 18.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Queſt. BUt here an apt queſtion may be moved.

Whether at this great day, the ſins of the Saints ſhall be brought into the judgement of diſcuſſion and diſcovery or no, whether the Lord will in this day publickly manifeſt, proclaim, and make mention of the ſins of his people, or no?

I humbly judge according to my preſent light, that he will not, and my reaſons for it are theſe, *viz.*

The firſt is drawn from Chriſts judicial proceedings in the laſt day ſet down largely and clearly, in the 25. of *Matthew*, where he enumerateth only the good works they had done, but takes no notice of the ſpots and blots, of the ſtains, and blemiſhes, of the infirmities, and enormities, of the weakneſſes and wickedneſſes of his people. My

Deut. 32. 4, 5, 6.

Second Reaſon is taken from Chriſts vehement proteſtations, that

that they ſhall not come in to Judgement, John 5. 24. *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life.* Thoſe words, ſhall not come into condemnation, are not rightly tranſlated, the Original is εἰς κρίσιν, ſhall not come into Judgement, not into damnation, as you read it in all your *Engliſh* Books; I will not ſay, what ſhould put men upon this expoſition, rather than a true tranſlation of the Original word. Further, it is very obſervable, that no Evangeliſt uſeth this double aſſeveration but St. *John*, and he never uſeth it, but in matters of greateſt weight and importance, and to ſhew the earneſtneſs of his Spirit, and to ſtir us up to better attention, and to put the thing aſſerted out of all queſtion, and beyond all contradiction; as when we would put a thing for ever out of all queſtion, we do it by a double

Vide Aquin. 87. *Suppl. Eſt.* in l. 4. *Sen. diſt.* 47.

Joh. 1. 51. ch. 3. 3, 11. ch. 6. 26, 32, 47, 53, *&c.*

double aſſeveration, verily, verily 'tis ſo, *&c.*

Thirdly, becauſe his not bringing their ſins into Judgement, doth moſt and beſt agree with many precious and glorious expreſſions that we find ſcattered (as ſo many ſhining, ſparkling Pearls) up and down in Scripture; as

Firſt, With thoſe of Gods blotting out the ſins of his people. *I,*
Iſa.43.25. *even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, for my own ſake, and*
Iſa.44.22. *will not remember thy ſins. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud thy tranſgreſſions, and as a cloud thy ſins.*

Who is this that blots out tranſgreſſions? he that hath the keys of Heaven and Hell at his girdle, that opens and no man ſhuts, that ſhuts and no man opens, he that hath the power of life and death, of condemning and abſolving, of killing and making alive, he it is that blotteth out trangreſſions: if an Under Officer ſhould blot out an Indictment, that perhaps might do

do a man no good, a man might for all that be at laſt caſt by the Judge: but when the Judge or King ſhall blot out the indictment with their own hand, then the Indictment cannot return; now this is every Believers caſe and happineſs.

Secondly, to thoſe glorious expreſſions of Gods not remembring of their ſins any more, *Iſa.* 43.25. *And I will not remember thy ſins*; *And they ſhall teach no more every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother, ſaying, Know ye the Lord, for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them, to the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſin no more.* So the Apoſtle *For I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their ſins, and their iniquities will I remember no more.* Jer.31.34. Heb.8.12.

And again, the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *This is the Covenant that I will make with them; After thoſe daies,*

daies, ſaith the Lord; *I will put my Laws into their heart, and in their minds will I write them, and their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

Heb.10.17 That which *Cicero* ſaid flatteringly of *Cæſar*, is truly affirmed of God, *Nihil oblivisci ſolet præter injurias*, he forgetteth nothing but the wrongs that daily are done him by his.

The meaning is, their iniquities ſhall be quite forgotten, I will never mention them more, I will never take notice of them more, they ſhall never hear more of them from me: though God hath an Iron memory to remember the ſins of the wicked, yet he hath no memory to remember the ſins of the righteous.

Thirdly, His not bringing their Sins into Judgement, doth moſt and beſt agree with thoſe bleſſed expreſſions, of his caſting their Sins into the depth of the Sea; and of his caſting them behind his back. *He will turn again, he will have compaſſion upon us, he will ſubdue our iniquities, and thou wilt caſt all their Sins into the depths of the Sea.* Where ſin is once Pardoned, the Remiſſion ſtands

Mic.7.19.

ſtands never to be repealed; pardoned ſin ſhall never come in account againſt the pardoned man, before God any more, for ſo much doth this borrowed ſpeech import: If a thing were caſt into a River, it might be brought up again, or if it were caſt upon the Sea, it might be diſcerned and taken up again, but when it is caſt into the depths, the bottom of the Sea, it can never be buoyed up again.

By the Metaphor in the Text, the Lord would have us to know, that ſins pardoned ſhall riſe no more, they ſhall never be ſeen more, they ſhall never come on the account more, he will ſo drown their ſins, that they ſhall never come up before him the ſecond time.

And ſo much that other Scripture imports; *Behold, for Peace I had great bitterneſs; But thou haſt in love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Corruption;* Iſa. 38. 17.

for

for thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back: theſe laſt words are a borrowed ſpeech, taken from the manner of men, who are wont to caſt behind their backs, ſuch things as they have no mind to ſee, regard or remember. A gracious ſoul hath alwaies his ſins before his face (*I acknowlege my tranſgreſſions, and my ſins is ever before me*) and therefore no wonder if the Lord caſt them behind his back. The Father ſoon forgets, and caſts behind his back thoſe faults that the Child remembers, and hath alwaies in his eyes; ſo doth the Father of Spirits.

Pſal. 51. 3.

Fourthly, *His not bringing their ſins into judgement*, doſt beſt agree with that ſweet and choice expreſſion of Gods pardoning the ſins of his people.

And I will cleanſe them from all their iniquity, whereby they have ſinned againſt me, and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have ſinned, and whereby they have tranſgreſſed againſt me. So in *Micah*,

Jer. 33. 8.

Who

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſions of the remnant of his heritage (as though he would not ſee it, but wink at it) *he retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in Mercy.* The Hebrew word, (*Noſe* from *Naſa*) that is here rendered, pardoned, ſignifies a taking away; when God pardons ſin, he takes it ſhier away, that if it ſhould be ſought for, yet it could not be found, as the Prophet ſpeaks; *In thoſe daies, and in that time, ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reſerve*; and theſe words, *and paſſeth by*, in the (afore-cited) ſeventh of *Micah*, and the 18. according to the Hebrew (*Vegnober Gnal*) is *and paſſeth over, God paſſeth over the tranſgreſſion of his heritage*; that is, he takes no notice of it; as a man in a deep muſe, or as one that hath haſte of buſineſs; ſeeth not

Mic.7.18.

Jer.50.20.

עָבַר *Gnabar*, he paſſed over.

not things before him, his mind being busied about other matters, he neglects all to mind his business.

As *David*, when he saw in *Mephibosheth* the feature of his friend *Jonathan*, took no notice of his lameness, or any other defect, or deformity: So God beholding in his people, the glorious Image of his Son, winks at all their faults and deformities, which made *Luther* say, *Do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sin*; and what is it to pardon sin, but not to mention sin?

Isa.40.1, 2.

Fifthly, *His not bringing their sins into the Judgement of Discussion and Discovery*, doth best agree to those expressions of forgiving, and covering; *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* In the Original this is in the plural *Blessednesses*, so here is a plurality of Blessings, a chain of Pearls.

Psal.32.1.

The like expression you have in the 85. *Psalm*, and the second *verse*;

Thou

Thou haſt forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou haſt covered all their Sin, Selah. For the underſtanding of theſe Scriptures aright, take notice, that to Cover, is a Metaphorical expreſſion, Covering is ſuch an action which is oppoſed to diſcloſure; to be covered, it is to be ſo hid and cloſed, as not to appear. Some take the Metaphor from filthy, loathſome objects, which are covered from our eyes, as dead carkaſſes are buried under the ground; ſome from Garments that are put upon us to cover our nakedneſs, others from the *Ægyptians* that were drowned in the red Sea, and ſo covered with water, others from a great Gulf in the earth that is filled up, and covered with earth, injected into it; and others make it in the laſt place, an alluſive expreſſion to the mercy-ſeat, over which was a covering.

Sic velantur, ut in judicio non revelentur.

Now all theſe Metaphors in the general, tend to ſhew this, that the Lord will not look, he will not ſee,

ſee, he will not take notice of the ſins he hath pardoned to call them any more to a judicial account.

As when a Prince reads over many treaſons, and rebellions, and meets with ſuch and ſuch which he hath pardoned, he reads on, he paſſeth by, he taketh no notice of them, the pardoned perſon ſhall never hear more of them, he will never call him to account for thoſe ſins more. So here, *&c.* When *Cæſar* was painted, he put his finger upon his ſcar, his wart. God puts his fingers upon all his peoples ſcars and warts, upon all their weakneſſes and infirmities, that nothing can be ſeen but what is fair and lovely; *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee*, Cant. 4.7.

Sixthly, It beſt agrees to that expreſſion of not imputing of ſin. Pſal. 32.2. *Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* So the Apoſtle in that *Rom.* 4.6 7 8. Now

not to impute iniquity, is not to charge iniquity, not to ſet iniquity upon his ſcore, who is bleſſed and pardoned, *&c.*

Seventhly, and laſtly, It beſt agrees with that expreſſion that you have in the 113. *Pſalm*, and the 11. and 12. *Verſes*, *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his mercy towards them that fear him: as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us.* What a vaſt diſtance is there betwixt the Eaſt and Weſt? of all viſible latitudes, this is the greateſt; and thus much for the third Argument. The

Fourth Argument, that prevaileth with me, to judge that Jeſus Chriſt will not bring the ſins of the Saints into the judgement of diſcuſſion and diſcovery in the great day, is, becauſe it ſeems unſuitable to three conſiderable things, for Jeſus Chriſt to proclaim the infirmities and miſcarriages of his people to all the world.

First, it ſeems to be unſuitable to the glory and ſolemnity of that day, which to the Saints will be a day of refreſhing, a day of reſtitution, a day of redemption, a day of coronation, as hath been already proved; now how ſuitable to this great day of ſolemnity, the Proclamation of the Saints ſins will be, I leave the Reader to judge.

Secondly, It ſeems unſuitable to all thoſe near and dear relations, that Jeſus Chriſt ſtands in towards his, he ſtands in the relation of a *Father*, *a Brother*, *a Head*, *a Huſband*, *a Friend*, *an Advocate*: Now are not all theſe by the Law of relation, bound rather to hide, and keep ſecret (at leaſt from the world) the weakneſſes, and infirmities of their near and dear relations; and is not Chriſt, is not Chriſt much more? By how much he is more a *Father*, a *Brother*, a *Head*, a *Huſband*, &c. in a ſpiritual way, than any others can be in a natural way, *&c.*

Iſa. 9. 6. Heb. 2. 11, 12. Eph. 1. 21, 22. Rev. 19. 7. Joh. 15. 1. Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It ſeems very unſuitable to what the Lord Jeſus requires of his in this world; the Lord requires that his people ſhould caſt a Mantle of Love, of Wiſdom, of ſilence, and ſecreſie over one anothers weakneſſes and infirmities.

Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrifes, but love covereth all ſins; Loves mantle is very large; Love will find a hand; a plaiſter to clap upon every ſore. *Flavius Veſpaſianus*, (the Emperour) was very ready to conceal his friends Vices, and as ready to reveal their Vertues: So is Divine love in the hearts of the Saints; *If thy Brother offend thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone*; *If he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother*. As the Pills of reprehenſion are to be gilded and ſugar'd over with much gentleneſs and ſoftneſs; ſo they are to be given in ſecret; tell him between him and thee alone. Tale-bearers, and Tale-hearers are alike abhominable.

Prov. 10. 12.
1 Pet. 4. 8.
Mat. 18. 15

Heaven is too hot, and too holy a place for them, *Pſal.* 15. 3. Now will Jeſus Chriſt have us carry it thus towards offending Chriſtians, and will he himſelf act otherwiſe? Nay, is it an evil in us to lay open the weakneſſes and infirmities of the Saints to the World? and will it be an excellency, a glory, a vertue in Chriſt, to do it in the great day, *&c.*

A fifth Argument, is this, It is the glory of a man to paſs over a Tranſgreſſion, *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*, or to paſs by it, as we do by perſons or things, we know not, or would take no notice of. Now, *is it the glory of a man to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*, and will it not much more be the glory of Chriſt, ſilently to paſs over the tranſgreſſions of his people, in that great day? The greater the treaſons and rebellions are, that a Prince paſſes over, and takes no notice of, the more is his Honour and Glory: and

Pro. 19. 11

Non amo quenquam niſi offendam, ſaid a Heathen.

and ſo doubtleſs it will be Chriſts in that great day, to paſs over all the Treaſons and Rebellions of his people, to take no notice of them, to forget them as well as to forgive them.

The Heathens have long ſince obſerved, that in nothing man came nearer to the Glory, and Perfection of God himſelf, than in Goodneſs and Clemency; Surely, if it be ſuch an honour to man *to paſs over a Trangreſſion*, it cannot be a diſhonour to Chriſt, to paſs over the Tranſgreſſions of his people, he having already buried them in the Sea of his blood. Again, ſaith *Solomon*, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*. Pro. 25.2. And why it ſhould not make for the Glory of Divine Love, to conceal the ſins of the Saints, in that great Day, I know not: And whether the concealing the ſins of the Saints in the great day, will not make moſt for their joy; and wicked men ſorrows, for their comfort, and wicked mens terrour

and torment, I will leave you to judge, and time and experience to decide; and thus much for the resolution of that great question. Having done with the Motives that may encourage and provoke young men to be good betimes, to know, love, seek and serve the Lord, in the spring and morning of their daies,

CHAP. VI.

I Shall now come to those directions and helps, that must (by assistance from Heaven) be put in practice, if ever you would be good betimes and serve the Lord in the Primrose of your daies. Now all that I shall say, will fall under these two heads.

First, *Some hings you must carefully and warily decline, and arm your selves against.* And

Secondly, *There are other things that you must prosecute and follow.*

First, *There are some things that you must warily decline*, and they are these. 1. Di-

I. Direction.

First, *If ever you would be good betimes, if you would be gracious in the ſpring and morning of your youth, Oh! then take heed of putting the day of Death far from you.* Amos 6. 3.

Young Men are very prone to look upon death afar off, and put it at a great diſtance from them; they are apt to ſay to death, as *Pharaoh* ſaid to *Moſes*; *Get thee from me, and let me ſee thy face no more*; if old men diſcourſe to them of Death, they are ready to anſwer as the high Prieſt did *Judas* (in a different caſe) *What is that to us? look you unto it:* we know ſickneſs will come, and death is a debt that we muſt all pay, but ſurely theſe gueſts are a great way from us, for doth not *David* ſay, *The daies of a man are threeſcore years and ten?* we have calculated our Nativities, and we cannot abate a day, a minute, a moment of *threeſcore and ten*, and therefore it is even a death to us to think of death, there being ſo great a Exod. 10. 28. Mat. 27. 4. Pſalm 90. 10.

diſtance between our birth-day, and our dying-day, as we have caſt up the account.

Ah Young Men! it is ſad, it is very ſad when you are ſo wittily wicked as to ſay with thoſe in *Ezekiel, Behold, they of the houſe of Iſrael ſay, the Viſion that he ſeeth is for many daies to come, and he propheſieth of the times that are afar off.*

Ezek 12. 27.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, by putting far away this day, you gratifie Satan, you ſtrengthen ſin, you provoke the Lord, you make the work of Faith and Repentance more hard and difficult, you lay a ſad Foundation for the greateſt fears, and doubts.

Ah! How ſoon may that ſad word be fulfilled upon you? *The Lord of that Servant, that ſaith his Lord delayeth his coming, ſhall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and ſhall cut him aſunder* (or cut him off) *and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

Mat. 24. 48,49,50, 51

teeth. When *Sodom*, when *Pharaoh*, when *Agag*, when *Amalek*, when *Haman*, when *Herod*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, when *Belſhazzer*, when *Dives*, when the fool in the Goſpel, were all in their Prime, their Pride, when they were all in a flouriſhing ſtate, and upon the very top of their Glory, how ſtrangely, how ſuddenly, how ſadly, how fearfully, how wonderfully were they brought down to the Grave, to Hell!

Ah Young Man! Who art thou? and what is thy Name, or Fame? what is thy power or Place? what is thy Dignity or Glory? that thou dareſt promiſe thy ſelf an exemption from ſharing in as ſad a Portion as ever Juſtice gave to thoſe who once were very high, who were ſeated among the Stars, but are now brought down to the ſides of the Pit? I have read a Story of one, that gave a young Prodigal a Ring with a Deaths Head on this condition, that he ſhould one hour daily for ſeven

Iſa. 13. 10. to the 17. verſe.

daies together, look and think upon it, which bred a great change in his life.

Ah young men! the ſerious thoughts of death may do that for you, that neither friends, counſel, example, prayers, Sermons, tears, have not done to this very day. Well, remember this, to labour not to die is labour in vain, and to put this day far from you, and to live without fear of death is to die living. Death ſeizeth on old men, and lays wait for the youngeſt. Death is oftentimes as near to the young mans back, as it is to the old mans face.

Senibus mors in januis, adoleſcentibus in inſidiis. Bern. De converſ. ad Cler. c. 14.

It is ſtoried of *Charles* the fourth, King of *France*, that being one time affected with the ſenſe of his many and great ſins, he fetch'd a deep ſigh, and ſaid to his Wife, By the help of God, I will now ſo carry my ſelf all my life long that I will never offend him more; which words he had no ſooner uttered, but he fell down dead and died.

Do

Do not, young men, put this day far from you, leſt you are ſuddenly ſurprized, and then you cry out (when too late) *a Kingdom for a Chriſt, a Kingdom for a Chriſt*; as once Crook-backt *Richard* the Third, in his diſtreſs, *a Kingdom for a Horſe, a Kingdom for a Horſe.*

Ah Young men! did you never hear of a young man that cryed out; *Oh! I am ſo ſick, that I cannot live, and yet* (woful wretch that I am) *ſo ſinful that I dare not die; Oh that I might live! Oh that I might die! Oh that I might do neither!* Well, Young men, remember this, the frequent, the ſerious thoughts of death will prevent many a ſin, it will arm you againſt many temptations, it will ſecure you from many afflictions, it will keep you from doting on the world, it will make you do much in a little time, it will make death eaſie when it comes, and it will make you look out betimes for a Kingdom that

1 Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccleſ. 9. 10.

ſhakes

ſhakes not, for riches that corrupt not, and for glory that fadeth not away. Therefore do not, Oh! do not put the day of Death far from you. Take heed of crying *Cras, Cras*, to morrow, to morrow, ſaith *Luther*, for a man lives forty years before he knows himſelf to be a fool, and by that time he ſees his folly, his life is finiſhed; ſo men dye before they begin to live.

II. Direction.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes, then take heed of leaning to your own underſtanding.*

Prov. 3.1, 5. Lean not, is a Metaphor from an old or ſick man leaning on his ſtaff, &c.

This Counſel wiſe *Solomon* gives to his Son (or the young men in his time) *My Son forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my commandments: Truſt in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own underſtanding.*

Youth is the age of folly, of vain hopes, and over-grown confidence! Ah how wiſe might many

many have been, had they not been too early wiſe in their own opinion.

Rehoboams Young Counſellours proved the overthrow of his Kingdom. 'Tis brave for youth, in all things to be diſcreet and ſober-minded. Three vertues they ſay are private ornaments of Youth, Modeſty, Silence, and Obedience.

Ah! Young men, keep cloſe in every action to this one principle, *viz.* in every action reſolve to be diſcreet and wiſe, rather than affectionate and ſingular.

I remember, that a young Gentleman of *Athens*, being to anſwer for his life, hired an Orator to make his Defence, and it pleaſed him well at his firſt reading; but when the young man, by often reading it, that he might recite it publickly by heart, begun to grow weary, and diſpleaſed with it, the Orator bid him conſider that the Judges

Judges and the people were to hear it but once; and then it was likely that they at the first instant might be as well pleased as he.

Ah! Young men, your leaning upon your selves, or upon others, will in the end be bitterness and vexation of spirit; Young men are very apt to lean upon their own Wit, Wisdom, Arts, Parts, as old men are to lean upon a staff to support them; (as the Hebrew Word signifies, that is rendred *Lean*; in that of *Prov.* 3. 5.) this hath been the bane of many a choice wit, the loss of many. a brave head, the ruine of many a subtil pate.

שען *Shagnan.*

Ajax thought it was only for Cowards and weaklings to lean upon the Lord for succour, not for him, whence he was foiled. Lean not to great parts, lean not to natural or acquired accomplishments, lest you lose them and your selves too. Leaning to natu-

natural or moral excellencies, is the ready way to be ſtript of all. *Babylon* that bore *her ſelf* bold upon her high Towers, thick walls, and twenty years proviſion laid in for a ſiege, was ſurprized by *Cyrus.*

'Twas ſaid of *Cæſar*, that he received not his wounds from the ſwords of enemies, but from the hands of friends, that is, from truſting in them.

Ah! How many young men have been wounded, yea, ſlain by truſting to their own underſtanding, their own abilities?

'Twas an excellent ſaying of Saint *Auſtin* (*in te ſtas, & non ſtas*) he that ſtands upon his own ſtrength, ſhall never ſtand. A Creature, is like a ſingle drop, left to it ſelf, it ſpends and waſts it ſelf preſently; but if like a drop in the fountain and Ocean of being, it hath abundance of ſecurity.

Ah! Young men, young men, if you will needs be leaning, then lean upon precious Promiſes 2 Pet. 1. 4. Pſal. 27. 1.

ſes, lean upon the Rock that is higher than your ſelves, lean upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as *John* did who was the youngeſt of all the Diſciples, and the moſt beloved of all the Diſciples. *John* leaned much and Chriſt loved him much. Oh! lean upon Chriſts wiſdom for Direction, lean upon his power for Protection, lean upon (his Purſe) his Fulneſs for Proviſion, lean upon his Eye for Approbation, lean upon his Righteouſneſs for Juſtification, lean upon his Blood for Remiſſion, lean upon his Merit for Salvation.

Joh. 21. 10.

Cant 8. 5.

As the young Vine without the Wall to ſupport her, will fall and ſink: So will you Young men, without Chriſt puts under his everlaſting arms to ſupport you, and uphold you; therefore above all leanings, lean upon him; by leaning on him, you will engage him; by leaning on him you will gain more honour than you can give; by leaning on him, you may even command him, and make *Him eternally yours.*

III. Di-

III. Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would be good betimes, if you would ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your daies, then take heed of flatterers and flattery.*

Ah! How many Young Men might have been very good, who are now exceeding bad, by hearkening to Flatterers, and affecting Flattery? Flattery undid young *Rehoboam*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *Nero*, *Alexander*, &c. Flatterers are ſoul-murderers, they are ſoul-undoers; they are like evil Chirurgions, that skin over the wound, but never heal it. 1 King. 12. and ch. 22. Act. 13. 22, 23, 24.

Anaſtaſius the Emperours Motto was (*mellitum venenum blanda oratio*) ſmooth talk proves often ſweet poyſon. Flattery is the very Spring and Mother of all impiety, it blows the Trumpet, and draws poor ſouls into Rebellion againſt God, as *Sheba* drew *Iſrael* to rebel againſt *David*; it put our firſt Parents

rents upon tasting the forbidden fruit; it put *Absolom* upon dethroning of his Father; it put *Haman* upon plotting the ruine of the *Jews*; it put *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, upon rebelling against *Moses*; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkness light, and light darkness, *&c.* it puts persons upon neglecting the means of Grace, upon undervaluing the means of Grace, and upon contemning the means of Grace; it puts men upon abasing God, slighting Christ, and vexing the Spirit; it unmans man, it makes him call black white, and white black; it makes a man change Pearls for Pebles, and Gold for Counters; it makes a man judge himself wise when he is fooliſh: knowing, when he is ignorant; Holy, when he is Prophane; Free, when he is a Prisoner; Rich, when he is Poor; High, when he is Low; Full, when he is Empty; Happy, when he is Miserable.

The Flatterers told *Dionysius*, that his spittle was as sweet as Honey. Rev. 3. 17, 18.

Ah!

Ah! Young men, and young women, take heed of flatterers, they are the very worſt of ſinners: they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardned in ſin, and ripened for Hell. God declares ſadly againſt them, and that in his Word and in his Works; in his Word, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Pſal.* 78. 36. *Pſal.* 36. 1, 2. *Job* 17. 5. *Ezekiel* 12. 24. *Dan.* 11. 21, 32, 34. *Pſal.* 12. 2, 3. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they ſpeak. The Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lips; and the tongue that ſpeaketh proud things: and* as God declares ſadly againſt them in his Word, ſo he hath declared terribly againſt them in his Works, as you may run and read in his Judegments executed upon *Ahabs* flattering Prophets, and upon *Haman*, and upon *Daniel's* (Princely) falſe Accuſers, *&c.* And why then will not you

Karah ſignifies any cutting off, either by death, or baniſhment, *&c.*

you ſtop your ears againſt thoſe wretches, that the hand and heart of God is ſo much againſt ?

A Preacher in *Conſtantines time*, preſumed to call the Emperour Saint to his face; but he went away with a check. *Euſeb. de vit. Conſt. lib.* 44.

Again, as God declares againſt them, ſo good men deteſt them, and declare againſt them, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Pſalm* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Proverbs* 2. 16. *Prov.* 7. 21. *Proverbs* 28. 23. *Job* 32. 21, 22. 1 *Theſ.* 2.5, 10. *Proverbs* 20. 19. *Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.* Why ſo; why ? becauſe a man that flattereth his Neighbour, ſpreadeth a Net for his feet, *Proverbs* 29. 5. The Hebrew word (*Mahhalick*, from *halak*) that is here rendered *Flatterer*, ſignifieth a *Smooth-boots*, a ſoft butter ſpoken man, becauſe flatterers uſe ſmooth ſoft ſpeeches. Alſo the word ſignifies *to divide*, becauſe a flatterers tongue is divided from his heart. Flatterers have their Nets, and thoſe that give ear to them, will be taken to their ruine. A lying tongue

tongue hateth thoſe that are afflicted by it, *And a flattering mouth worketh ruine, Prov.* 26. *ult.* A flattering mouth ruines name, fame, eſtate, body, ſoul, life.

Valerian the *Roman* Emperour uſed to ſay (*Non acerba, ſed blanda*) not bitter, but flattering words do all the miſchief.

When *Alexander* the great, was hit with an Arrow in the ſiege of an *Indian* City, which would not heal, he ſaid to his Paraſites, *You ſay that I am* Jupiters *Son, but this wound cries, that I am but a Man.*

Now ſhall good men deteſt them, and abhor them as they are the Peſt of Peſts, the Plague of Plagues; and will you own them, will you take pleaſure in them, to your ruine here and hereafter? the Lord forbid. O ſay to all flatterers, as he to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I more to do with you?*

Nay, once more conſider, that not

The Hebrew word דהה *Dahbah* ſignifies ſuch a violent forceing of one as he cannot ſtand. It ſignifies to throw down, to drive on forwards till a man fall into deſtruction.

Hoſ. 14.8.

not only the good, but the bad, not only the best, but (some of) the worst of men have manifested their detestation of Flatterers and Flattery.

Leo the Emperour used to say, (*Occulti inimici pessimi*) a close enemy is far worse than an open. When a Court Parasite praised *Segismund* the Emperour above measure, the Emperour gave him a sound box on the ear.

When *Aristobulus* the Historian presented to *Alexander* the Great a Book that he had written of his glorious acts, wherein he had flatteringly made him greater than he was; *Alexander* (after he had read the Book) threw it into the River *Hydaspes*, and said to the Author, it were a good deed to throw thee after it.

When the Flatterers flattered *Antigonus*, he cryed out (*mentiris, mentiris in gutture, Hæ virtutes non latent in me*) thou lyest, thou lyest in thy throat, these ver-

times

tues that thou ſpeakeſt of, I have not in me; but I am like a Leopard, that hath ten black ſpots to one white.

Auguſtus Cæſar, and *Tiberius Cæſar*, were deadly enemies to flatterers, inſomuch that they would not be called Lords by their own children.

A good Symbol is attributed to *Trebonianus Gallus*, *viz.* (*Nemo amicus idem & adulator*) no flatterer can be a true friend.

Ariſtippus (the Philoſopher) ſeeing *Diogenes* waſhing of Herbs for his Dinner, ſaid, If *Diogenes* knew how to make uſe of Kings, he need not live upon raw Herbs, as he doth; to which *Diogenes* replyed, that if *Ariſtippus* could content himſelf with Herbs, he need not to turn Spaniel, or to flatter King *Dionyſius* for a meals meat.

Ah! Young men, young men, ſhall God, ſhall good men, ſhall bad men deteſt and declare againſt Flatterers and Flattery, and will no

not you turn a deaf ear upon them, yea, fly from them, as from a Serpent, and ſhun them, as you would ſhun Hell it ſelf? If you do not, the very Heathens but now cited, will riſe in judgement againſt you.

Flatterers are the very worſt of Sinners. The Flatterers told *Cæſar*, that his Freckles in his face, were like the Stars in the Firmament; they bought and ſold *Aurelius* the Emperour at pleaſure. And *Auguſtus* complained, when *Varrus* was dead, that he had none now left, that would deal plainly and faithfully with him.

So men may gain by flattery, they will be like *Harpalus*, who ſaid, (*Quod Regi placet, mihi placet*) that which pleaſeth the King, pleaſeth me, when *Aſtyages* ſet his own Son before him to feed upon him.

O but let every young man ſay, (into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall) *Quod deo placet, mihi placet*

cet) that which pleaſeth God pleaſeth me.

I have been the longer upon this, out of love to young mens Souls, who are ſo apt to be inſnared in the Flatterers Net; if ever you would be good in good earneſt, you muſt abhor Flatterers, as the firſt-born of the Devil, and as ſuch as are moſt pernicious to mens happineſs, both here and hereafter.

Whilſt an *Aſs* is ſtroaked under the belly, you may lay on his back what burthen you pleaſe.

It is reported of one *Oramazes*, that he had an enchanted Egg, in which (as he boaſted himſelf) he had encloſed all the happineſs of the World, but being broken nothing was found in it but wind. *Flatterers are the greateſt Cheaters, the greateſt Deceivers in the World.*

They ſay of the *Crocodile*, that when he hath killed a man, he will weep over him, as if he were ſorry, and did repent for what he had done; the Application is eaſie.

IV. Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would be good betimes, if you would ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your daies, then take heed of engaged affections to the things of the world.*

Mat. 19. 16--24.

The Young man in the Goſpel took many a ſtep toward Heaven; *All theſe things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?* Chriſt makes a very fair offer to him in the next words, *Jeſus ſaid unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and ſell that thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in Heaven, and come and follow me*; thou ſhalt have Heaven for Earth, a Sea for a Drop, a Treaſure for a Mite, a Crown for a Crum. I but the young mans affections were ſtrongly engaged to the things of the world: and therefore he turns his back upon Chriſt, and goes away ſorrowful becauſe he had great poſſeſſions. Oh! the madneſs, the folly of this young man,

Multi amando res multas ſunt miſeri, habendo miſeriores, Aug. in Pſal. 26.

man, who to enjoy a little temporal felicity, had bid an everlasting farewel to Christ and Glory; in that of *Gen.* 13. 2. it is said that *Abraham* was very rich in Cattle, in Silver, and in Gold; the Hebrew word (*Cabeth*) that is here rendered *Rich*, signifies, heavy, it signifies a burthen, to show us, that riches are a heavy burthen; and an hindrance many times to Heaven and Happiness; and this young man in the Gospel found it so to his eternal undoing. Though the Load-stone cannot draw the Iron when the Diamond is in presence, yet earthly possessions did draw this young mans Soul away, when Christ the Pearl of price was present; the World is a silken Net, and this young man found it so; the World is like golden Fetters, and this young man found it so; the World is like sweet poyson, and this young man found it so; for he had drunk so large a draught of it, that there was no room in his

They are *dulce venenum*, a sweet poyson, *Bern.*

ſoul for Chriſt or heaven, for Grace or Glory. Some ſay, that when the Serpent *Scytale* cannot overtake the flying Paſſengers, ſhe doth with her beautiful colours, ſo aſtoniſh and amaze them, that they have no power to paſs away till ſhe have ſtung them: ſuch a Serpent the world proved to the young man in the Goſpel, it did ſo affect him and take him, ſo amaze him and amuſe him, that he could not ſtir till it ſtung him to death.

If money were thrown to the Dogs, they would not ſo much as ſmell at it; the greater is their folly and madneſs, that will go to Hell Gates for it.

When the Moon is fulleſt, it is furtheſt from the Sun, ſo the more men have of the World the further (commonly) they are from God; and this the young man in the Goſpel made good.

Many have ventured life and limb, and many a better thing, to gain the things of this world, and yet after all, they have got nothing at all. *Achan*'s golden Wedge, proved a Wedge to cleave him; and his Garment, a Garment to ſhrowd him.

The whole world is circular, the heart

heart of a man is triangular, and we know a circle cannot fill a triangle; yea, if it be not filled with the three Perſons in Trinity, it will be filled with the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil. The World may be reſembled to the Fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the ſight, ſmooth in handling, ſweet in taſte, but deadly in effect and operation.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, have none of you found it ſo?

The World in all its bravery, is no better than the Cities which *Solomon* gave to *Hiram*, which he called *Cabul*, that is to ſay, diſpleaſing——or dirty; the world will afford nothing but trivial Flowers, ſurrounded with many Bryers: O the vanity! the uncertainty! the imperfection of all things below! if a man ſhould weigh his pay and his pains together, his miſeries and his pleaſures together, his joys and his ſorrow together, his mer- 1 King. 9. 13.

cies, and his croſſes together, his good daies, and his bad daies together, will he not conclude vanity of vanity, all is vanity?

In my other Treatiſes, you may read more of the vanity, inſufficiency, impotency, mutability, uncertainty, and inconſtancy of the World, and to them I refer you.

It was a wiſe and Chriſtian Speech of *Charles* the Fifth, to the Duke of *Venice*, who when he had ſhewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and earthly Paradiſe, inſtead of admiring it, or him for it, only returned him this grave and ſerious *memento*, (*Hæc ſunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*) theſe are the things which make us unwilling to die; it was a good ſaying of one to a great Lord (upon his ſhewing him his ſtately Houſe, and pleaſant Gardens;) Sir, you had need make ſure of Heaven, or elſe when you dye, you will be a very great loſer.

Ah! Young men, Young men, 'tis only Heaven that is above all winds, ſtorms, and tempeſts; nor hath God caſt man out of Paradiſe, for

for him to think to find out another Paradiſe in this World; the main reaſon, why many young men dote upon the world, is, becauſe they are not acquainted with a greater Glory; Men ate Acorns, till they were acquainted with the uſe of Wheat. The Woman had the Moon under her feet, when ſhe was cloathed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve Stars upon her head. Rev. 12.1

Ah! Young men; were you but Cloathed with the Son of Righteouſneſs, and had you a Crown ſet upon your heads, by the hand of Faith, you would have all the things of this world, which are as low beſpotted, and mutable as the Moon, under your feet; well young men, as ever you would be good betimes, ſit looſe from the things of this world, be no longer worſhippers of this golden Calf, and never let the world, that ſhould be but your ſervant, become your Lord; Oh! let not the Devil and the world, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27, 35. ch. 10. 31.

have more service for an ounce of Gold, than Christ shall have for the Kingdom of heaven!

Ah young men! the world and you must part, or Christ and you will never meet, *You cannot serve God and Mammon.* The two Poles shall sooner meet than the love of Christ, and the love of the World.

Mat.6.14.

V. Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would be good betimes, if you would know, seek, and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your youth, then take heed betimes of carnal Reason, take heed of consulting with flesh and blood.*

Gal.1.15, 16.

Cicero a Heathen, could say that man would not be so wicked, and do so wickedly, were it not for his reason.

Many a hopeful young man hath been undone temporally, and undone eternally, by hearkening to those evil Counsellors.

Carnal Reason is an enemy, yea, an utter enemy, nay, it is not only an utter enemy, but it is enmity, yea, enmities, *Rom.* 8.7. An enemy may be reconciled, but enmity can never

ver be reconciled. Carnal Reaſon is not only averſe, but it is utterly averſe to all goodneſs, it builds ſtrong holds and ſyllogiſms againſt the moſt glorious Goſpel truths, and accounts the precious things of Chriſt, as a ſtrange thing; carnal reaſon will make God and Goſpel do homage to it; when carnal Reaſon is in the Throne, Chriſt and his truths muſt all bow, or be judged before its Bar.

Ah! Young men, young men, as ever you would be good betimes, ſtop your ears againſt all carnal Reaſonings within you; carnal Reaſon judges the choiceſt things of the Goſpel to be meer fooliſhneſs, it is pur-blind, and cannot ſee how to make a right judgement of Chriſt, his Word, his waies, and yet will control all. 1 Cor. 1. 2.

If you are reſolved to be ſtill Scholars to this Maſter, then you muſt reſolve to be unhappy here, and miſerable hereafter. But

It is safer and better for you to imitate those young men, who in the morning of their daies have graciously, wisely, and resolutely withstood those evil Counsellors, Carnal Reason, Flesh and Blood; *Joseph*, and *Moses*, *Daniel*, *Shadrach*, *Meshack*, and *Abednego*, all these in the Primrose of their youth, were good at turning the deaf ear to carnal Counsel, and carnal Counsellors.

Gen. 39. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, &c. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26. Dan. 1.

Cassianus reports of a young man that had given himself up to a Christian life, and his Parents misliking that way, they wrote letters to him to perswade him from it; and when he knew that there were letters come from them, he would not open them, but threw them into the fire, this example is worth following.

Another famous Example you have in the story of King *Edward* the sixth, when *Cranmer* and *Ridley* came to him, and were very earnest to have him give way to his Sister, the Lady *Mary*, to have

have Maſs; he ſtood out, and pleaded the caſe with them, that it was a ſin againſt God, and provoking to the eyes of his Glory, *&c.* but they ſtill continued to uſe many Carnal Arguments to perſwade the King (who was but a Child about fifteen years of age) but he withſtood them a great while; but at length, when he ſaw he could not prevail (with all his pleading) againſt thoſe grave men, but that they ſtill continued their ſuit, he burſt out into bitter weeping, and ſobbing, deſiring them to deſiſt; the Motioners ſeeing his zeal and conſtancy, wept as faſt as he, and being overcome, they went away, and told one that the King had more Divinity in his little finger, than they had in all their bodies.

Ah! young men, it will be your ſafety, and your glory, to write after this Princely Copy, when you are ſurrounded with carnal reaſon and carnal Counſellors, *&c.*

VI. Di-

VI. Direction.

Sixthly and Lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then take heed of comparing your selves with those that are worse than your selves.*

Joh. 9. 39, 40.

Young men are very apt to compare themselves with those that are worse than themselves, and this proves a snare unto them, yea, oftentimes their bane, their ruine. As it did the young Pharisee in the Gospel, who pleaded his negative Righteousness: he was not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers; and stood on his comparative Goodness, nor as this Publican; he stands not only upon his Comparisons, but upon his Disparisons; being blind at home, and too quick-sighted abroad, he contemneth, and condemneth the poor Publican, who was better than himself, making good that saying of *Seneca*, the nature of man (saith he) is very apt (*utimur perspicillis magis quam speculis*) to use Spectacles to be-

Luk. 18. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Thales, one of the seven Sages, being asked what was the easiest thing in the world to do: answered to know other mens faults, and none of our own.

hold other mens faults, rather than Looking-Glaſſes to behold our own; ſuch Phariſees do juſtly incur the cenſure which that ſowr Philoſopher paſt upon Grammarians, *That they were better acquainted with the evils of* Ulyſſes, *than with their own.* *Diogenes apud Laertium.* lib. 6.

Ah! Young men, young men, you know he that drinks poiſon, though he drinks not ſo much as another; and he that commits Treaſon, though not ſo great, ſo high Treaſon as another, ſhall yet as certainly be poiſoned, and hanged as he that hath drunk a greater quantity of poiſon, and committed higher acts of Treaſon. Mat. 11. 22, 23, 24, 25.

Sirs, do not delude, and befool your own ſouls, if you are not as wicked as others, you ſhall not be as much tormented as others, but yet you ſhall be as certainly damned as others, you ſhall as certainly go to Hell as others, you ſhall as ſure be ſhut out for ever from God, Chriſt, Saints, Angels, and all the Treaſures, Plea- As in Heaven one is more Glorious than another, ſo in Hell one ſhall be more miſerable than another. *Aug.*

pleasures and glories of Heaven, as others, except it be prevented, by timely repentance on your side, and pardoning mercy on Gods.

Wilt thou count it madness, O young man! in him that is sick, to reason thus; I am not so sick as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Physician? and in the wounded man to say, I am not so desperately wounded as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Chirurgeon? and in the Traytor to say, I am not guilty of so many foul and hainous treasons as such and such, and therefore I will not look after a Pardon? and in the necessitous man, to say, I am not so hard put to it as such and such, and therefore I will not welcom a hand of Charity? and wilt not thou count it the greatest madness in the world, for thee to put off thy Repentance, and thy returning to the Lord in the spring and morning of thy youth, because that thou art not as sinful,

as

as wicked as such and such? If to have a softer bed, a milder punishment in Hell than others, will satisfie thee, then go on; but if thou art afraid of the worm that never dies, and of the fire that never goes out; but like that stone in *Arcadia*, which being once kindled could not be quenched; O then begin to be good betimes! O seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days.

To think often of Hell, is the way to be preserved from falling into Hell. Ah! young men, young men, that you would often consider the bitterness of the Damneds Torments, and of the pittilessness of their Torments, and of the diversity of their Torments, and of the easelessness of their Torments, and of the remedilessness of their Torments, (*Momentaneum est quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat.*) The Sinners delight here is momentany, that which torments hereafter is perpetual; when as Sinners

Chrysost. Hom. 44. in Mat.

Sinner is in Hell, doſt thou think O young man! that another Chriſt ſhall be found to die for him, or that the ſame Chriſt will be Crucified again for him, or that another Goſpel ſhould be preached to him? Surely no.

Ah! Why then wilt thou not betimes return and ſeek out after the things that belong to thy everlaſting peace? I have read of Pope *Clement* the Fifth, that when a young Nephew of his dyed, he ſent his Chaplain to a Necromancer, to know of him how it fared with him in the other world; the Conjurer ſhewed him to the Chaplain, lying in a fiery bed in hell, which when the Pope underſtood, he never joyed more, *&c.*

Jac. Rev. Hiſt. Pont. Rom. 119.

Ah Young Man, that theſe occaſional hints of hell, may be a means to preſerve thee from lying in thoſe everlaſting flames.

Bellarmine tells us of a certain Advocate of the Court of *Rome*, that

that being at the point of death, was ſtirred up by them that ſtood by, to repent, and call upon God for Mercy, he with a conſtant countenance, and without ſign of fear, turned his ſpeech to God and ſaid, *Lord, I have a deſire to ſpeak unto thee, not for my ſelf, but for my Wife and Children, for I am haſtening to Hell, neither is there any thing that thou ſhouldſt do for me.* And this he ſpake, ſaith *Bellarmine*, (who was preſent and heard it) as if he had ſpoken of a journey to ſome Village or Town, and was no more affrighted. *Bellar. de Arte moriendi*, l. 2. c. 10.

Sir *Francis Bacon* alſo in his Hiſtory of *Henry* the Seventh, relates how it was a common by-word of the Lord *Cordes*, *That he would be content to lie ſeven years in Hell, ſo he might win* Calis *from the* Engliſh. But if thou, O young man, art given up to ſuch deſperate Atheiſm, and carnal Apprehenſions of hell, I am afraid God will confute thee one day by Fire and Brimſtone; but I would willingly hope

hope better things of all those young persons, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall. And thus you see what things must be declined and avoided, if ever you would be good betimes, if ever you would seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your daies.

CHAP. VII.

But in the second place, *as those things must be declined, so other things must be carefully and diligently practised, if ever you would be good betimes.* I shall instance only in those that are most considerable and weighty: As,

First, *If ever you would be good betimes, &c. then you must labour to be acquainted with four things betimes.*

1. Duty.

First, *You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scriptures betimes,* you must study the Word betimes; *David* studied the Word in

in the morning of his daies, in the Primrose of his youth, and this made him wiser than his enemies, yea, than his teachers; this made him as much excel the Ancients, as the Sun excels the Moon, or as the Moon excels the twinkling Stars. *Timothy* was good betimes, and no wonder; for in the Prim-rose of his daies, he was acquainted with the Scripture, he was inured to the Word from his childhood, yea, from his infancy, as the Word properly signifies; see in that 119. *Psalm* the 9. *verse*, *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his waies? by taking heed according to thy Word.* There is no way to a holy heart, and a clean life, but by acquainting of your selves with the Word betimes. One hath long since observed, That God hath bowed down the Scriptures to the capacity even of Babes and Sucklings, that all excuse may be taken away, and that Young Men may be encouraged to study the Scri-

Psal. 119. 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

Ἀπὸ Βρέφους from a Suckling.

Aug.

Hier Epist. Adoro plenitudinem Scripturarum. Tert.

Scripture betimes. Ah! Young men, no Histories are comparable to the Histories of the Scriptures. 1. For Antiquity. 2. Rarity. 3. Variety. 4. Brevity. 5. Perspicuity. 6. Harmony. 7. Verity. All other Books cannot equal Gods, either in Age, or Authority, in Dignity, or Excellency, in Sufficiency or Glory.

Moses is found more ancient and more honourable than all those whom the *Grecians* make most ancient and honourable, as *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Jupiter* himself, whom the *Greeks* have seated in the top of their Divinity.

Gregory calls the Scripture (*Cor & animam Dei*) the heart and soul of God.

The whole Scripture is but one entire Love-letter, dispatcht from the Lord Christ to his Beloved Spouse, and who then but would still be a reading in this Love-letter? Like *Cacilia* a *Roman* Maiden of Noble Parentage, who carried alwaies about her the new Testament, that she might still be

a

a reading in Christs Love-Letter, and behold the sweet workings of his Love, and heart, towards his dear and precious ones.

Luther found so much sweetness in the Word, in Christs Love-letter, that made him say, he would not live in Paradise if he might, without the Word (*at cum verbo etiam in inferno facile est vivere*) but with the Word he could live in hell it self.

The Word is like the stone *Garamantites*, that hath drops of Gold in it self, enriching of the believing Soul. This the Martyrs found, which made them willing to give a load of hay, for a few leaves of the Bible in *English*. *Hier. Epist. ad Hebod. in Epitaph. Nepotiani.*

St. *Augustine* professeth that the Sacred Scriptures were his whole delight.

And St. *Hierom* tells (us) of one *Nepotianus*, who by long and assiduous Meditation on the holy Scriptures, had made his breast the Library of Jesus Christ.

And

And *Rabbi Chiia* in the *Jerusalem Talmud* saith, That in his account all the world is not of equal value with one word out of the Law. That which a Papist reports lyingly of their Sacrament of the Mass, *viz.* that there are as many mysteries in it, as there be drops in the Sea, dust on the Earth, Angels in Heaven, Stars in the Sky, Atoms in the Sun beams, or Sands on the Sea shore, *&c.* may be truly asserted of the Holy Scriptures.

Oh the Mysteries, the Excellencies, the Glories, that are in the Word! Ah! no Book to this Book, none so useful, none so needful, none so delightful, none so necessary to make you happy, and to keep you happy as this. It is said of *Cæsar* (*major fuit cura Cæsari libellorum quam purpura*) that he had greater care of his Books, than of his Royal Robes; for swimming thorow the waters to escape his enemies, he carried his Books in his hand above the waters,

waters, but loſt his Robes; now what are *Cæſars* Books to Gods Books?

Ah! Young men, young men, he Word of the Lord is a light to guide you, a Counſellour to counſel you, a comforter to comfort you; a Staff, to ſupport you, a Sword, to defend you; and a Phyſician, to cure you; the Word is a Mine, to enrich you; a Robe to cloath you, and a Crown to Crown you; it is Bread, to ſtrengthen you; and Wine to chear you; and a Honey-comb to feaſt you; and Muſick to delight you; and a Paradiſe, to entertain you. Pſal. 119.

Oh! therefore before all, and above all, ſearch the Scripture, ſtudy the Scripture, dwell on the Scripture, delight in the Scripture, treaſure up the Scripture; no Wiſdom, to Scripture Wiſdom; no Knowledge, to Scripture Knowledge; no Experience, to Scripture Experience; no Comforts to Scripture Comforts; no De- The Jewiſh *Rabbins* were wont to ſay that upon every letter of the Law, there hang Mountains of profitable matter.

Delights to Scripture delights, no convictions to Scripture convictions, nor no conversion to Scripture conversion.

Tolle & Lege.

St. *Augustine* hearing a voice from heaven, that bad him take and *Read*, thereupon turning open the New Testament, he fell upon that place, *Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* This Scripture so sunk into his heart, as that it proved the means of his conversion, as himself reports. This St. *Augustine*, as he was once preaching, his memory failing of him, contrary to his purpose, he fell upon reproving the *Manicheans*, and by a Scripture or two, not before thought of, to confute their Heresies, he converted *Firmus* a *Manichean*, as he after acknowledged to *Augustine*, blessing God for that Sermon.

Rom. 13. 13, 14.

Lib. 8. Confess. c. 11. Possidon. de vita Aug.

It is reported of one *Adrianus*, who seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things in the Cause of God, he asked, what was that which caused them to suffer such things? and one of them named that Text, *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entred into the Heart of man, to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* And this Text was set home with such a power upon him, as that it converted him, and made him to profess Religion, and not only to profess it, but to die a Martyr for it. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Cyprian was converted by reading the Prophesie of *Jonah*. *Junius* was converted by reading the first Chapter of *John* the Evangelist.

I have read of a scandalous Minister that was struck at the Heart and converted in reading that Scripture, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* &c. Rom. 2. 21

We read, that *Paphnutius* converted *Thais* and *Ephron*, two famous

mous Strumpets from uncleanness, only with this Scripture Argument,

Heb. 4.13 *That God seeth all things in the dark, when the doors are fast, the windows shut, and the curtains drawn.*

I have read of a Poor man, who perswaded a young Scholar to leave reading of Poetry, *&c.* and fall upon reading of the Scripture, which accordingly he did; and it pleased the Lord, before he had read out *Genesis*, to change his heart, and to turn him to the Lord in the Primrose of his days, he being then but twenty years of age.

Origen was her Schoolmaster.

I have read of a young Lady called *Potamia*, of a very Illustrious Family, who endured very much in her Martyrdom by the extream cruelty of *Basilides* her Executioner: yet after her death, he bethinking himself of the holy words, and Scripture expressions that were uttered by her during her cruel Torments, became a Christian, and with

few days after, was himself likewise crowned with Martyrdom.

James Andreas, a Godly Minister, hearing of a *Jew*, that for Theft was hanged by the heels, with his head downward, having not seen that kind of punishment, he went to the place where he was hanging between two Doggs that were always snatching at him to eat his flesh; the poor wretch repeated in Hebrew some Verses of the *Psalms*, wherein he cryed to God for mercy; Whereupon *Andreas* went near to him, and instructed him in the Principles of Christian Religion, about Christ the *Messiah*, *&c.* exhorting him to believe in him, and it pleased God so to bless his Scripture exhortations to him, that the Dogs gave over tearing of his flesh, and the poor *Jew* desired him to procure, that he might be taken down and Baptized, and hung by the neck for the quicker dis-

A Miracle of Mercy.

patch, which was done accordingly.

I might produce other Instances, but let these suffice, to provoke all young persons to a speedy, serious, diligent, and constant study of the Scripture. Ah Sirs! you do not know howsoon your blind minds may be enlightned, your hard Hearts softned, and your proud Spirits humbled, your sinful Natures changed, your defiled Consciences purged, your distempered affections regulated, and your poor Souls saved, by searching into the Scripture, by reading the Scripture, and by pondering upon the Scripture; you should lay up the Manna of God's Word in your Hearts, as *Moses* laid up the Manna in the Golden pot. And as *Tamar* did with the Staff and the Signet that she received from *Judah*, she laid them up till she came to save her life, and did save her life by it, as you may see in holy story.

Much in the Word is wrapp'd up in a little.

It is more to be admired, than to have *Homer*'s Iliads comprized in a Nutshel.

Heb. 9. 4.

Gen. 38. 18, 36.

The

The laying up the Word *Now*, may be the saving of your Souls another day.

I have read of little Bees, that when they go out in stormy weather, they will carry a little of their comb or grave with them, that they may be ballanced, and not carried away with the Wind.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, you had need to have your Thoughts and Hearts ballanced with the pretious Word, that you may not be carried away with every Wind of Doctrine, as many have been in these days, to their Destruction and Confusion.

Narcissus, a beautiful Youth, though he would not love them that loved him, yet afterwards fell in love with his own shadow: Ah! How many Young Men in these days, who were once lovely, and hopeful, are now fallen in love with their own and others shadows, with high, empty, airy Notions, and with strange, monstruous speculations, to their own damnation? 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Holy *Melancthon*, being newly converted, thought it impossible for his hearers to withstand the evidence of the Gospel, but soon after he complained that old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melancton*.

Ah! Young men, young men, if you do not in good earnest give up your selves to the reading, to the studying, to the pondering, to the believing, to the affecting, to the applying, and to the living up to the Scripture, Satan will be too hard for you, the World will be too hard for you, your Lusts will be too hard for you, Temptations will be too hard for you, and Deceivers will be too hard for you, and in the end, you will be miserable; and thus much for the first thing, *&c.*

2. Duty.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must acquaint your*

your ſelves with your ſelves betimes. If you would be gracious in the Spring and Morning of your days, then you muſt ſee betimes how bad you are, how vile, how ſinful, how wretched you are; no man begins to be good, till he ſees himſelf to be bad; the young Prodigal never began to amend, he never thought of returning to his Father, till he came to himſelf, till he began to return to his own Soul, and ſaw himſelf in an undone Condition. Luke 15. 21, 22.

Ah! Young men, young men, you muſt ſee your ſelves, *To be Children of Wrath, to be Enemies, to be Strangers, to be afar off from God, from Chriſt, from the Covenant, from Heaven, to be Sins Servants, and Satans Bond-ſlaves*; the ready way to be found, is to ſee your ſelves loſt; the firſt ſtep to mercy, is to ſee your miſery; the firſt ſtep towards *Heaven*, is to ſee your ſelves near to *Hell*: you will not look af- Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, 12, 13. Rom. 6. 16 Joh. 8. 44. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

after the Physitian of Souls, you will not prize the Physitian of Souls, you will not desire the Physitian of Souls, you will not match with the Physitian of Souls, you will not fall in love, in league with the Physitian of Souls, you will not resign up your selves to the Physitian of Souls, till you come to see your Wounds, till you come to feel your Diseases, till you see the Tokens, the Plague-sores of Divine Wrath and Displeasure upon you; as the whole do not need the Physitian, so they do not desire, they do not care for the Physitian.

Austin saith, he would willingly go thorow Hell to Christ; so will all that see their need of Christ.

Ah! Young Men, as you would be good betimes, begin to acquaint your selves with your sinful selves betimes, begin to acquaint your selves betimes with your Natural and undone Condition.

Zanchy writ a Tractate, *Quod nihil scitur.*

There is a three-fold self.

1. There is a natural Self, as a mans Parts, Wit, Reason, Wit, Affe-

Affections, and Inclinations, &c.

2. A Religious self, and so a Mans Duties, Graces, Obedience, Righteousness, Holiness, are called ones self.

There is a sinful self, and so a Mans Corruptions, Lusts, Sinful Nature and Dispositions, are called ones self, now if ever you would be good betimes, you must acquaint your selves with your sinful self betimes.

Luther said, that if a man could perfectly see his own faults, the sight thereof would be a very Hell unto him.

Demonicus being asked at what time he began to be a Philosopher: Answered, *When I began to know my self.* So a man never begins to be a Christian, till he begins to know himself. And indeed for a man to know himself, to acquaint himself with himself, is one of the hardest works in all the World. For as the eye can see all things but it self, so most can discern all faults but their own. *Henry* the fourth, Emperour of *Germany*, his usual speech was, *Multi multa*

sciunt, se autem nemo, many know much, but few know themselves.

The very Heathens did admire that saying as an Oracle, (*nosce teipsum*) know, and be acquainted with thy own self. The main exhortation of *Chilo*, one of the seven Sages, was, Know thy self. And *Plato* recordeth, that this saying of *Chilo*, know thy self, was written in Letters of Gold, upon the Portal of *Apollo*'s Temple.

Juvenal saith, that this saying, Know thy self, came from Heaven. *Macrobius* saith; That the Oracle of *Apollo* being demanded what course should be taken for attaining to Felicity, answered, Only teach a man to know himself.

Thus you see, that both Divinity and Philosophy do agree in this, that the best and surest way to true felicity, is to know our selves, to acquaint our selves with our selves.

This

This Duty the Apoſtle charges upon the *Epheſians*, *Remember that you being in times paſt Gentiles in the fleſh, that at that time you were without Chriſt, aliens from the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, *and ſtrangers from the Covenant of Promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the World.*

Here are five withouts, *without Chriſt, without the Church, without the Promiſe, without Hope, and without God in the World.*

Man in his Natural ſtate is afar off, (he is without) three manner of ways.

1. In point of opinion and apprehenſion.

2. In point of Fellowſhip and Communion.

3. In point of Grace and Converſion.

As you would be good betimes, dwell much upon your corrupt nature betimes. Ah! ſuch is the corruption of our Nature, that propound any divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or wet

Eph. 2. 11, 12.

Of dull and inſenſible men, one long ſince thus complained (*patientius ferre Chriſti jacturam, quamſuam*) that they did more calmly paſsby the injuries done to Chriſt, than thoſe that were done unto themſelves. O the Plague of unſenſibleneſs.

wet wood with hissing; propound any evil, then it is like fire to straw, it is like the foolish Satyr, that made haste to kiss the fire; it is like that unctuous matter, which the Naturalists say, sucks, and snatches the fire to it, with which it is consumed: till you come to be sensible of this, you will never begin to be good, you will never look to have your Hearts changed, and your Souls saved.

The *Æthiopians* paint Angels black, and Devils white, in favour of their own Complexion, and they say, that if the bruit Creatures could draw a Picture of the Divine Nature, they would make their shape the Copy; and thus they flatter and delude themselves; take heed young men, take heed that you do not put the like cheats upon your own Souls; take heed that you be not like those Limners who so as they can make a mans Picture gay and gaudy, care not to draw it so as

to

to reſemble him. It is ſafeſt and beſt O young man! to know the worſt of thy ſelf, and to know thy ſelf as thou art in thy ſelf, and not as thy own flattering Heart, or as other flatterers may repreſent thee to thy ſelf.

3. Duty.

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, then *you muſt acquaint your ſelves with Jeſus Chriſt betimes.*

You muſt know him betimes; A man never begins to be good, till he begins to know him that is the Fountain of all goodneſs; *This is Life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Joh. 17. 3.

The knowledge of Chriſt, is the beginning of eternal life, is the way to eternal life, it is a taſte of eternal life, it is a ſure pledge and pawn to the Soul of eternal life.

The *Spaniards* ſay of *Aquinas*, that he that knows not him, knows not any thing; but he that

that knows him, knows all things, he that knows Jeſus Chriſt, not notionally only, but practically, not apprehenſively only, but effectively; he knows all things that may make him happy: but he that knows not Jeſus Chriſt, knows nothing that will ſtand him in ſtead, when he ſhall lie upon a dying Bed, and ſtand before a Judgement Seat.

Juſtin Martyr relates, that when in his diſcourſe with *Tryphon*, he mentioned the Knowledge of Chriſt, as conducing to our happineſs and perfection, *Tryphons* friends laughed at it; but I hope better things of thoſe, into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall.

Sirs, The Sun is not more neceſſary to the World, the Eye to the Body, the Pilot to the Ship, the General to the Army, *&c.* than the knowledge of Chriſt betimes, is neceſſary for all thoſe that would be good betimes.

Dear hearts, as ever you would be good betimes, *you muſt labour*, even

even as for life, *to know, and be thorowly acquainted with these six things*, concerning Jesus Christ betimes.

First, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that there is every thing in Christ, that may encourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to believe on him, and to marry with him.*

Nec Christus nec Cœlum patitur hyperbolem.

If you look upon his Names, his Natures, his Offices, his Graces, his Dignities, his Excellencies, his Royalties, his Glories, his Fulnesses, they all speak out as much.

Are you poor? Why, Christ hath tried Gold to enrich you. Are you naked? Christ hath white Rayment to cloath you. Are you spiritually blind? Christ hath eye-salve to enlighten you. Are you in straits? he hath wisdom to counsel you. Are you unrighteous? he will be righteousness to you. Are you unholy? he will be holiness and sanctification to you; are you hungry?

Rev. 3.18.

1 Cor. 1.. 30.

gry? he is Bread to feed you. Are you thirsty? he is Wine and Milk to satisfie you. Are you weary? he is a Bed, a Seat to rest you. Are you sick? why, he is a Physician to cure you, *&c.* (*Omne bono in summo bono*) all good is in the chiefest good.

Joh. 6.48. Isa. 55. 1. Mat. 11. 28 Mat. 9. 12.

The creatures have their particular Goodness, Health hath its particular goodness, and Wealth hath its particular goodness, and Learning hath its, and the Favour of the Creature hath its, *&c.* But now Jesus Christ he is an Universal good; all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are united to Christ; yea, all the whole Volume of perfections which is spread through Heaven and Earth is Epitomized in him, *Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, quia in ipso tuo bono, bona sunt omnia, Aug.* One Christ will be to thee in stead of all things else, because in him are all good things to be found. *Abraham's* Servant brought forth Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold,

Christ is the *Bonum in quo omnia bona.*

to

to win *Rebeckah*'s heart to *Iſaac*: ſo ſhould you, O Young Men, be often in preſenting to your own view, all thoſe amiable and excellent things that be in Chriſt to win your hearts over to Chriſt betimes. Gen. 24. 53.

Secondly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you muſt know betimes that Jeſus Chriſt is mighty to ſave.* Heb. 7. 25. εἰς τὸ παντελὲς Perpetually, Conſtantly. Mat. 9. 28. Iſa. 63. 1. Mighty to ſave.

He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt, all them that come unto him, that believe in him, and that caſt themſelves upon him. The Lord hath laid help upon one that is mighty. Chriſt ſaves perfectly, thorowly, perpetually, them that come unto him.

The three Tongues that were written upon the Croſs, in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, to witneſs Chriſt, to be the King of the *Jews*, do each of them in their ſeveral Idioms avouch this Axiom, that Chriſt is an All-ſufficient Saviour; and a three-

fold

fold cord is not easily broken. They say, it is true of the Oyl at *Rhemes*, that though it be continually spent in the Auguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never wasteth. Christ is that pot of Manna, that Cruse of Oyl, that bottomless Ocean that never fails his people; there is in Christ an All-sufficiency for all Creatures, at all times, in all places.

Christ is never *vacuis manibus*, empty handed.

The great *Cham* is said to have a Tree full of Pearls hanging by clusters; but what is the great *Cham*'s Tree to Christ our Tree of Life, who hath all variety and plenty of all fruit upon him? the happinesses that come to Believers by Christ, are so many, that they cannot be numbred; so great, that they cannot be measured; so copious, that they cannot be defined; so precious, that they cannot be valued; all which speaks out the fulness and All-sufficiency of Christ.

Rev. 22.2. Christ is like the Trees of the sanctuary, which were both for meat, and for medicine. Ezek. 47. 12.

There is in Christ (*plentitudo abun-*

bundantiæ, and *plenitudo redundantiæ*) a fulneſs of abundance, and a fulneſs of redundancy, as well as a fulneſs of ſufficiency.

There is in Chriſt,

1. The fulneſs of the Spirit.
2. The fulneſs of Grace.
3. The fulneſs of the Image of God.
4. The fulneſs of the God head.
5. The fulneſs of Glory.

But I muſt not now open, nor dilate on theſe things, leſt I ſhould tire both my ſelf and the Reader.

Plutarch in the life of *Phocion*, tells us of a certain Gentlewoman of *Ionia*, who ſhewed the wife of *Phocion* all the rich Jewels and precious ſtones ſhe had; ſhe anſwered her again, all my Riches and Jewels is my Husband *Phocion*; ſo may a penitent Sinner ſay of his bleſſed Saviour, Chriſt is all my Jewels, my Riches, my Treaſures, my Pleaſures, *&c.* his Sufficiency is all theſe, and more

more than theſe to me.

The *Spaniſh* Embaſſadour coming to ſee the Treaſury of Saint *Mark* (in *Venice*) which is cryed up throughout the World, fell a groping to find whether it had any bottom, and being asked why: anſwered, in this, amongſt others things, my great Maſters Treaſure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottom, as I find yours to have: alluding to the Mines in *Mexico*, and *Potoſi*; but what are the *Spaniards* Treaſures to Chriſts Treaſures? a man may without much groping find the bottom of all earthly Treaſures, but who can find the bottom of Chriſts Treaſuries? ſhould all created excellencies meet in one glorified breaſt, yet they could not inable that glorious God-like Creature to ſound the bottom of thoſe Riches and Treaſures which are in Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 3. 8. All which ſpeaks out Chriſts All-ſufficiency: and thus much for the ſecond thing.

Ipſe Deus ſufficit ad præmium. Bern.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, if you would be good betimes, *then you must know betimes that there is a marvellous willingness and readiness in Christ, to embrace, to entertain, to welcome returning Sinners, and to shew mercy and favour to them.*

The Young Prodigal did but think of returning to his Father, and he ran and met him, and instead of kicking or killing him, he kissed him, and embraced him, his Bowels rolled within him, and his compassions flowed out freely to him. *To every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk, without money and without Price.* *Nazianzen* improveth this place thus; Oh this easie way of contract! he giveth more willingly than others sell; if thou wilt but accept, that is all the price; though you have no merits, though you have nothing in your selves to encourage you, yet will you accept? If you

Luke 15. 20, 22, 22.

Isa. 55. 1. The meaning is, sell thy self, thine own wit, reason, self-worth, and that is all Christ desires, said *Augustine* upon the words.

you will, all is freely yours, the waters shall be yours, to cleanse you; and the Milk yours, to nourish you; and the Bread yours, to strengthen you; and the Wine yours, to comfort you; here poor sinners are called three times to come; come saith Christ, come, come, to shew how marvellous ready and willing he is, that poor sinners should taste of Gospel delicates. So in that *John* 7. 37. *Jesus stood and cried, If any Man thirst, let him come to me, and drink.* So in that, *Rev.* 22, 17. *Let him that is a thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the Water of life freely.* So in that, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* And so in that, *Luke* 14. 21. *The Master of the House said to his Servant, go out quickly into the Streets and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor, and the Maimed, and the Halt, and the*

Cant. 2. 8. Christ comes leaping upon the Mountains, and skipping upon the Hills, to shew his readiness and willingness to do good to souls.

the blind. Here is no man of Quality, of Dignity, of Worldly Pomp or Glory, or of any self-sufficiency, that is invited to the Feast, but a company of poor, ragged, deformed, slighted, neglected, impoverished, wounded Sinners, these are invited to Feast with Christ.

Concerning this willingness of Christ, I shall speak more when I come to deal with old sinners in the close of this discourse, and to that I refer you for further and fuller satisfaction, concerning the great readiness and willingness of Jesus Christ to entertain returning sinners.

Fourthly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that Jesus Christ is designed, Sealed, and Appointed by the Father, to the Office of a Mediatour.*

Joh. 6. 27. The Father sealed, even God, so the Greek hath it.

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting Life, which the Son

Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed: God the Father hath made Christs commission authentical, as men do theirs by their Seal. It is a Metaphor, a *Simile* taken from them who give Commissions under Hand and Seal. God the Father hath given it under his Hand and Seal, that Jesus Christ is the only person that he hath appointed and sealed, allowed, and confirmed to the Office of our redemption. If Jesus Christ were never so able to save, and never so willing and ready to save poor sinners, yet if he were not appointed, designed, and sealed for that work, the awakened sinner would never look out after him, nor desire Union with him, nor Interest in him; and therefore it is of very great consequence to know that God the Father hath sent and sealed Christ to be a Saviour to his people; him hath God the Father sealed; sealed by way of Destination, and sealed by way

of qualification, ſealed by his Doctrine, ſealed by his Miracles, ſealed by his Baptiſm, ſealed by his Reſurrection, but above all, ſealed by his glorious Unction. *The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the Priſon to them that are bound.* To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in *Zion*, to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the Oyl of joy for mourning, the Garment of praiſe for the Spirit of heavineſs, that they might be called Trees of Righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified; neither Saints nor Angels are ſealed and appointed to the great work of Redemption, but the Lord Jeſus is: you ſhould alwaies look upon the

Iſa. 61. 1, 2, 3. Luk. 4. 18. Chriſt was anointed of God, 1. By way of deſignation. 2. By way of qualification. 3. By way of inauguration This anointing was ordinarily uſed in the inſtalling men to Offices of any eminence.

Lord Jesus, as sealed and anointed to the Office of a Mediator, and accordingly plead with him.

Ah Lord! It is thy Office, as thou art a sealed and an anointed Saviour and Redeemer, to subdue my sins, to change my Nature, to sanctifie my heart, to reform my life, and to save my soul; and therefore do it for thy Names sake; O do it for thy Office sake, do it for thy Glories sake.

Psal. 45. 8. Acts 4. 27. Acts 10. 8. Job 1. 16. Joh. 3. 34.

Thou art anointed with the Oyl of Gladness above thy fellows; Thou hast a larger effusion of the Spirit upon thee than others. Thou art anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power, after an extraordinary measure, and manner; thou art indued with all Heroical Gifts and Excellencies plentifully, abundantly, transcendently; thou art sealed and predestinated, thou art invested into this Office of Mediatorship, under the Fathers hand and

and ſeal; and therefore whither ſhould I go for ſalvation, for remiſſion, for redemption, for grace, for glory, but to thee?

Fifthly, If you would be good betimes, *then you muſt know betimes that there is no way to Salvation, but by Jeſus Chriſt.*

Neither is their Salvation in any other (ſpeaking of Chriſt) for there is none other Name under Heaven, given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved; if ever you are ſaved, you muſt be ſaved by him, and him only, you muſt not look for another Saviour, nor you muſt not look for a Co-Saviour, you muſt be ſaved wholly by Chriſt, and only by Chriſt, or you ſhall never be ſaved; you muſt cry out, as *Lambert* did (when he was in the Fire, and lifted up his hands and fingers ends flaming) *None but Chriſt, None but Chriſt.* When *Auguſtus Cæſar* deſired the Senate to joyn two Conſuls with him for the better Government of the State;

Act. 4. 12. ἐν ἄλλῳ, that is, by or through the mediation of any other.

Act. and Mon.

Suetonius.

the Senate anſwered, that they held it as a diminution of his Dignity, and a diſparagement of their own judgement, to join any with ſo incomparable a man as *Auguſtus*.

Ah Friends! It is a diminution of Chriſts dignity, ſufficiency, and glory, in the buſineſs of your ſalvation, to join any thing with the Lord Jeſus, and it is the greateſt diſparagement in the world to your own judgements, knowledge, prudence, and wiſdom, to yoak any with Chriſt in the work of Redemption, in the buſineſs of Salvation.

St. *Auguſtine* ſaith, that *Marcellina* hung Chriſts Picture, and the Picture of *Pythagoras* together; many there are, not only in *Rome*, but in *England* (yea, I am afraid in *London*) who join Chriſt and their works together, Chriſt and their Prayers together, Chriſt and their Teachers together, Chriſt and their Mournings together,

gether, Christ and their earnings together, Christ and their Arms together.

Ah! What a poor, what a weak, what an impotent, what an insufficient Saviour do these men make Jesus Christ to be? Except these men come off from these things, and come up only to Jesus Christ in the great business of Salvation, they will as certainly and as eternally perish (notwithstanding their hearing, knowing, and talking much of Christ) as those that never heard of Jesus Christ.

In the old Testament, God commands them not to wear a Garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and Linnen together, neither shall a Garment mingled of Linnen and Woollen come upon thee. Deut. 22. 11. ch. 29. v. 19.

This Law was Figurative, and shews us, that in the case of our Justification, Acceptation, and Salvation, we are not to join our Works, our Services, with

the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; God abhors a linſie-wolſie Righteouſneſs. And as by the Letter of this Law, in the Hebrews account, one thread of wool in a Linnen Garment, or one Linnen thread in a Woolen Garment, made it unlawful, ſo the leaſt manner of mixture in the buſineſs of Juſtification, makes all null and void. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwiſe Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace; otherwiſe Work is no more Work: He that ſhall mix his Righteouſneſs with Chriſts, he that ſhall mix his puddle with Chriſts purple Blood, his Rags with Chriſts Royal Robes, his Copper with Chriſts Gold, his Water with Chriſts Wine, *&c.* is in the ready way to periſh for ever.

Phil. 3.9. 10. Rev.19.8. Gal.3.28. ch.2.16.

Rom.12.6. Eph.2.5. Rom. 5. 15,16,18.

On Earth Kings love no Corrivals, Power is impatient of Participation. Chriſt will be *Alexander* or (*Nemo*) no body, he will

will be all in all in the buſineſs of Juſtification, or he will be nothing at all; we muſt ſay of Chriſt, as it was once ſaid of *Cæſar* (*ſocium habet neminem*) he may have a companion, *&c.* but he muſt not have a competitor.

1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 5. 19, 20.

Let us ſay of Chriſt as the Heathen once ſaid of his petty Gods (*contemno minutulos iſtos Deos, modo Jovem propitium habeam*) ſo long as he had his *Jupiter* to friend, he regarded them not; So, ſo long as we have our Jeſus to friend, and his Righteouſneſs and Blood to friend, we ſhould contemn all other things, and abhor the bringing of any thing into competition with him; a real Chriſtian cares not for any thing that hath not (*Aliquid Chriſti*) ſomething of Chriſt in it. He that holds not wholly with Chriſt, doth very ſhamefully neglect Chriſt, *Aut totum mecum tene, aut totum omitte*, ſaith *Gregory Nazianzen.*

Eph. 3. 19, 20. Pſal. 21. 15, 16, 19. compared.

Iſa. 55. 2. Rom. 10. 3.

There is no other Name, no other Nature, no other Blood, no other Merits, no other perſon to be juſtified and ſaved by, but Jeſus Chriſt; you may run from creature to creature, and from duty to duty, and from ordinance, to ordinance; and when you have wearied and tired out your ſelves in ſeeking eaſe and reſt, ſatisfaction and remiſſion, juſtification and ſalvation in one way and another, you will be forced after all to come to Chriſt, and to cry out, Ah! none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. Ah! none to Chriſt, none to Chriſt; no works to Chriſts, no duties, no ſervices to Chriſts, no prayers, no tears to Chriſts, no righteouſneſs, no holineſs to Chriſts.

Well Friends, remember this, that all the tears in the world cannot wipe off (meritoriouſly) one ſin, nor all the Grace and holineſs that is in Angels and Men, buy out the Pardon of the leaſt tranſgreſſion. All remiſſion is only

ly by the blood of Christ.

Sixthly and lastly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that the heart of Jesus Christ is as much set upon sinners now he is in Heaven, as ever it was when he was upon Earth.*

Christ is no less loving, less mindful, less desirous of Sinners eternal welfare now he is in Heaven (in a far Country) than he was when he lived on Earth, witness his continuing the Ministry of Reconciliation among poor Sinners in all ages; witness the constant Treaties, that by his Embassadours and Spirit he still hath with poor Sinners, about the things of their peace, the things of eternity, witness his continual knockings, his continual callings upon poor Sinners, by his Word, Rod, Spirit, to Open, to Repent, to lay hold on Mercy, and to be at Peace with him; witness his continual wooing of poor Sinners in the face of all neglects, and put-offs;

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Rev. 3.10. Isa. 56. 4. Isa. 27.5.

Cant. 5.2,3 Luke 14.

in the face of all delays and denials; in the face of all harſh entertainment and churliſh anſwers; in the face of all gain-ſaying, and carnal reaſonings in the face of all the ſcorn and contempt that wretched ſinners put upon him; and witneſs that plain word, *Jeſus Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to day and for ever*, Chriſt is the ſame afore time, in time, and after time; he is unchangeable in his Eſſence, in his Promiſes, and in his Affections. *I am Alpha, and Omega, the beginning, and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.*

Prov.6.9. Mat.22.4, 23,27.

Heb.13.8.

Rev.1.8. 11.ch.21. 6. ch.22.13. It was a cuſtom among the *Turks* to cry out every morning from an high Tower, God alwaies was, and alwaies will be, and ſo ſalute their *Mahomet*.

The Phraſe is taken from the Greek Letters, whereof *Alpha* is the firſt, and *Omega* the laſt; the firſt and laſt Letters of the Greek Alphabet is a deſcription of me, ſaith Chriſt, who am before all, and after all, who am above all, and in all, who am unchangeable in my ſelf, and in my thoughts and good will to poor ſinners. Therefore do not, poor ſouls, entertain any

any hard thoughts concerning Jeſus Chriſt, as if he was leſs mindful, leſs pitiful, and leſs merciful to poor ſouls now he is in in Heaven than he was when his abode was in this World.

And thus I have gone over thoſe ſix things that you muſt know concerning Chriſt betimes, if ever you would be good betimes. When Pope *Leo* lay upon his Death-bed, Cardinal *Bembus* citing a Text of Scripture to comfort him, he replyed (*Apage has nugas de Chriſto*) away with theſe bawbles concerning Chriſt; but I hope better things of you, and do deſire that you will ſay of all things (below this knowledge of Chriſt that I have opened to you) as that devout Pilgrim, who travelling to *Jeruſalem*, and by the way viſiting many brave Cities, with their rare Monuments, and meeting with many friendly entertainments would often ſay, I muſt not ſtay here, this is not *Jeruſalem*. Ah! ſo do you, Young men and

and women, in the midſt of all your worldly delights and contents, cry out, Oh! we muſt not ſtay here, this is not *Jeruſalem*, this is not that Knowledge of Chriſt that I muſt have, if ever I am happy here, and bleſſed hereafter.

4. Duty.

Fourthly and laſtly, *If you would be good betimes, then you muſt acquaint your ſelves with thoſe that are good betimes.*

If you would be gracious in the ſpring and morning of your youth, then you muſt begin betimes to be much in with them, who are much in with Chriſt, who lie near his heart, and know much of his mind, *He that walketh with wiſe men ſhall be wiſe, but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed*; or as the Hebrew hath it, ſhall be broken in pieces, as when an Army is broken and routed by an enemy. *Holech* from *Halech*, walking with the

Pro. 13. 20. רוע Shall be broken, or ſhall be worſe, from ע to be taught.

the wiſe, he ſhall be wiſe, for ſo the Original hath it; it is not talking with the wiſe, but walking with the wiſe, that will make you wiſe; it is not your commending and praiſing of the wiſe, but your walking with the wiſe, that will make you wiſe; it is not your taking a few turns with the wiſe, that will make you wiſe, but your walking with the wiſe that will make you wiſe; there is no getting much good by them that are good, but by making them your ordinary and conſtant companions.

'Twas the ſaying of one, as oft as I have been among wicked men, I return home leſs a man than I was before.

Ah Friends! you ſhould do as *Joſeph* in *Egypt*, of whom the Scripture ſaith, *Pſal.* 105. 22. (according to the Hebrew phraſe) that he tied the Princes of *Pharaoh*'s Court about his heart.

If ever you would gain by the Saints, you muſt bind them upon your ſouls, you muſt labour to have very near, cloſe, and intimate communion with them.

The Jews have a Proverb, that two

two dry ſticks put to a green one will kindle it. The beſt way to be in a flame Godward, Chriſt-ward, Heaven-ward, and Holineſs-ward, is to be among the dry ſticks, the kindled coals, the Saints; for as live Coals kindle thoſe that are dead, ſo lively Chriſtians will heat and enliven thoſe that are dead Godwards, Chriſtwards, Heaven-wards, and Holineſswards. As Iron ſharpeneth Iron, ſo doth the face of man his friend.

Prov. 27. 17.

Mens Wits, Parts, and Gifts, and Induſtry, commonly grow more ſtrong, vigorous, and quick, by friendly conference, and communion.

And as he that comes where ſweet Spices and Oyntments are ſtirring, carries away a ſweet ſavour with him: So he that converſeth with thoſe that are good, ſhall carry away that goodneſs, and ſweetneſs with him, that ſhall render him ſweet, deſirable, and delectable to others.

Polemon,

Polemon, that St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaks of, who was all for Wine and Play, *&c.* became a brave man when he came acquainted with the Philoſophers School. So many young men, that have been all for Wine and Women, for Playing and Toying, for Vanity, and Folly, have become brave men, pretious men, by the company, counſel, and example of thoſe who were gracious. Doctor *Taylor* the Martyr, rejoyced that ever he came into Priſon, becauſe he came thither to have acquaintance with that Angel of God, *John Bradford* (as he calls him;) ſo doubtleſs many young perſons there be, that have much cauſe to rejoice, and for ever to bleſs the Lord, that ever they came acquainted with ſuch and ſuch (who fear the Lord and who walk in his waies) for the good that they have received by them. An. Ep. 130.

Algerius an *Italian* Martyr, ſaid, he had rather be in a Priſon with

with *Cato*, than with *Cæsar* in the Senate-house.

Moses was of the same mind and metal. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27.

Ah! Young men, young men, you were better be with the people of God, when they are in the lowest and most contemptible condition, than with the great (wicked) ones of the World, when they are all in their Royalty, and Glory; in the day of account you will find that they have made the best Market, who have rather chosen to keep company with *Lazarus*, though in his rags, than they would (with others) keep company with *Dives*, though in Purple Robes.

Those that keep ill company are like those that walk in the Sun, who are tann'd insensibly.

Well, Young men, remember this, cloaths and company do oftentimes tell tales, in a mute, but significant language.

Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou art, saith the *Spanish* Proverb. *Cicero* (though a Heathen) had rather to have no Companion, than a bad one: the Lord grant, that this

this Heathen (and others among them, that were of the ſame mind with him) may never riſe up in judgement againſt any of you, into whoſe hands this Treatiſe may fall.

And thus I have diſpatched thoſe four things that you muſt be acquainted with betimes, (*viz.* the Scripture, your own hearts, and conditions, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thoſe that fear him) if ever you would be good betimes.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes*, if you would ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your daies, *Then you muſt ſhun the occaſions of ſin betimes.* A man will never begin to be good, till he begin to decline thoſe occaſions that have made him bad, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil.*

You muſt ſhun and be ſhie of the very appearance of ſin, of the very ſhews and ſhadows of ſin. The word εἶδος, which is ordinarily rendred *Appearance*, ſignifies kind,

We muſt ſhun (*quicquid ſuit male ſolo-ratum*) whatſoever looks but ill favouredly, as *Bernard* hath it.

kind or ſort; and ſo the meaning of the Apoſtle ſeems to be this, *Abſtain from all ſort, or the whole kind of evil*; from all, that is truly ſo, be it never ſo ſmall.

The leaſt ſin is dangerous; *Ceſar* was ſtabb'd with Bodkins, and many have been eaten up of Mice and Lice.

The leaſt ſpark may conſume the greateſt Houſe, the leaſt leak may ſink the greateſt Ship, the leaſt ſin is enough to undo thy ſoul, and therefore ſhun all the occaſions that lead unto it.

Job 31.1. Gen.39.10 Pſal.26.3, 4, 5,6,7.

Job made a covenant with his eyes; *Joſeph* would not be in the room where his Miſtreſs was; and *David* (when himſelf) would not ſit with vain perſons. As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, we cannot be ſecure. He that hath Gunpowder about him, had need keep far enough off from ſparkles; he that is neither tender of his credit abroad, nor comfort at home, had need ſhun, and be ſhie

ſhie of the very ſhew and ſhadow of ſin! he that would neither wound Conſcience, nor Credit, God, nor Goſpel, had need hate the garment ſpotted with the fleſh.

Jude 23. The ſin, and the coat of the ſin is to be hated ſaith *Ambroſe.*

In the Law, God commanded his people, not only that they ſhould worſhip no Idol, but that they ſhould demoliſh all the Monuments of them, and that they ſhould make no Covenant nor Affinity with thoſe who worſhipped them; and all, leſt they ſhould be drawn by theſe occaſions to commit Idolatry with them; he that would not taſte of the forbidden fruit, muſt not ſo much as gaze on it, and he that would not be bit by the Serpent, muſt not ſo much as parley with the Serpent.

Latet anguis in herba, Snakes are found amongſt roſes. Numb. 6. 3, 4. *Quid eſt vitare peccata, niſi vitare occaſiones peccatorum?* Melan.

It is very obſervable, That in the Law, the *Nazarite* was not only commanded to abſtain from Wine and ſtrong Drink, but alſo he might not eat Grapes, whether moiſt or dry, or any thing that

What is it to avoid ſin, but to avoid the occaſions of ſin.

that is made of the Vine-Tree; from the Kernels, even to the Husk; but why not theſe ſmall things, in which there could be no danger of drunkenneſs? ſurely, leſt by the contentment of theſe he might be drawn to deſire the Wine, and ſo be brought on to ſin, to break his Vow (and ſo make work for Hell, or for the Phyſician of Souls.) God hereby forbidding the moſt remote occaſions; ſhews how wary and exactly careful men ſhould be, to ſhun and avoid all occaſions, provocations, and appearances of evil; and indeed, we had need to keep off from ſlippery places, who can hardly ſtand faſt on dry ground; he that ventures upon the occaſion of ſin, and then prayes, *Lord, lead me not into temptation*, is like him that thruſts his finger into the fire, and then prays, that it may not be burnt; or, like him that is reſolved to quench the fire with Oyl, which inſtead of quenching it, is as fuel

to

to feed it and encreaſe it.

It was a notable ſaying of one, *Majus eſt miraculum inter vehementes occaſiones non cadere, quam mortuos ſuſcitare*, It is a greater Miracle, not to fall, being among ſtrong occaſions, than it is to raiſe up the dead: he that would not be defiled; muſt not touch Pitch; he that would not be be burnt, muſt not carry fire in his boſom; he that would not eat the meat, muſt not meddle with the broth; he that would not fall into the Pit, muſt not dance upon the brink; he that would not feel the blow, muſt keep off from the Train; *Keep thee far from a falſe matter*, Exod. 33. 7.

Bernard in Cant. Ser. 65.

Prov. 6. 27, 28, 29.

Non diu tutus eſt periculo proximus. Cypr. He is not long ſafe, that is near to danger.

He that will not flie from the occaſions and allurements of ſin (though they may ſeem never ſo pleaſant to the eye, or ſweet to the taſte) ſhall find them in the end to be more ſharp than vinegar, more bitter than Wormwood, more deadly than poyſon.

There

There is a great truth in that ſaying of the Son of *Syrach*, *He that loveth danger ſhall periſh therein; he that will not decline danger, ſhall not be able to decline deſtruction.*

Eccl. 3. 26,27.

Socrates ſpeaks of two young men that flung away their belts, when being in an Idol Temple, the luſtrating water fell upon them, deteſting (ſaith the Hiſtorian) the Garment ſpotted by the fleſh: and will you, O young men, play and toy with the occaſions of ſin? the Lord forbid.

There are ſtories of ſeveral Heathens, that have ſhunned, and avoided the occaſion of ſin; and will you dare to venture upon the occaſions of ſin?

Alexander would not ſee the woman after whom he might have luſted.

Scipio Africanus, Warring in *Spain*, took new *Carthage* by ſtorm, at which time a beautiful and Noble Virgin fled to him for

for ſuccour to preſerve her chaſtity, being but four and twenty years old (and ſo in the heat of youth) hearing of it, would not ſuffer her to come into his ſight, for fear of temptation, but cauſed her to be reſtored in ſafety to her Father. *Aure. Victor.*

Livia counſelled her Husband *Auguſtus*, not only not to do wrong, but not to ſeem to do ſo, *&c.* *Dio in vita.*

Cæſar would not ſearch *Pompey*'s Cabinet, leſt he ſhould find new matters of revenge.

Plato mounted upon his Horſe, and judging himſelf a little moved with pride, did preſently light from his Horſe, leſt he ſhould be overtaken with loftineſs in riding.

Theſeus is ſaid to cut off his golden locks, leſt his enemies ſhould take advantage by taking hold of them.

Ah! Young men, young men, ſhall the very Heathens thus ſhun and flie from the occaſions of ſin,

ſin, and will not you? will not you who ſit under the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel? theſe will in the great day of account be ſad and ſore witneſſes againſt thoſe that dally and play with the occaſions of ſin.

To prevent carnal carefulneſs Chriſt ſends his Diſciples to School to the irrational Creatures, *Mat.* 6. 26. —— 32. And to prevent your cloſing with the occaſions of ſin, let me ſend you to School to the like Creatures, that you may learn by them to ſhun and avoid the occaſions of ſin.

The *Sepiæ*, a certain kind of fiſh, perceiving themſelves in danger of taking, by an inſtinct which they have, they do darken the water, and ſo many times eſcape the Net which is laid for them.

Geeſe (they ſay) when they fly over *Taurus*, they keep ſtones in their mouths, leſt by gagling they ſhould diſcover themſelves to the Eagles, which are amongſt the Mountains waiting for them; now

it

if all these considerations put together, will not work you to decline the occasions of sin, I know not what will. There is a truth in that old saying,

He that will no evil do,
Must do nothing belongs thereto.

The *Israelites* must have no leaven in their houses, till the Pass-over be done, lest they should be tempted to eat of it. Exod. 12. 19.

3. Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must remember the eye of God betimes.*

If you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then you must study Gods Omnipotence betimes. *Doth not he see my ways and count all my steps? for his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the* Psal. 139. 2, 14. Job 31. 4. Ch. 34. 21, 22, &c.

workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

Non ſe putent adulteri noctis tenebris vel parietum obtegi. Beda.

I have read that *Paphnutius* converted two famous young Strumpets, *Thais* and *Ephron*, from uncleanneſs, only with this Argument, that God ſeeth all things in the dark, when the doors are faſt, the windows ſhut, and the curtains drawn. By this very Argument, *Solomon* labours to take off his young men from carnal and ſinful courſes; *And why wilt thou, my Son, be raviſhed with a ſtrange woman, and embrace the boſom of a ſtranger? for the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Thou mayeſt deceive all the World, like that counterfeit *Alexander* in *Joſephus*'s ſtory, but *Auguſtus* will not be deceived, he hath quicker and ſharper eyes.

Prov. 5. 20, 21.

Noli peccare, Deus videt, angeli aſtant, &c. Take heed what thou doſt, God beholds thee, Angels obſerve thee.

Ah! Young men, young men, you may deceive this man, and that, and as eaſily deceive your ſelves, but you cannot deceive him, who is (παν ὀφθαλμὸς *totus oculus*

oculus) all eye. As the eyes of a well-drawn Picture are faſtened upon thee, which way ſoever thou turneſt, ſo are the eyes of the Lord. I have read of one, who being tempted to Adultery, ſaid, they could not be private enough, and being carried from room to room, anſwered, we are not yet private enough, God is here.

Ah friends! his eyes which are ten thouſand times brighter than the Sun, compaſs thy words, thy ways, thy works, thy thoughts, thy bed, thy board, thy bench. The *Egyptian* Hieroglyphick for God, was an eye on a ſcepter, ſhewing that he ſees and rules all things. Jer. 13. 17. ch. 29. 23.

Ah Friends! All Thoughts, Words, Hopes, and Hearts, are naked, opened, diſſected, and quartered before that God with whom you have to do. God is very curious and exact in marking and obſerving what is done by men, that he may render to every man according to his works. Heb. 4. 13. *Tetracheliſmena.*

Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. 6. c. 10.

St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaks of an old *Comœdian*, who having no other Spectators, went uſually into the Theatre, and acted before the Statues of the Gods.

Ah! Young Men and Women, the eye of God ſhould be more to you, than all the world beſides; O that the Scripture might be written with the Pen of a Diamond upon your hearts. *Hear ye not me* (ſaith the Lord) *and will ye not tremble at my preſence?* There is a great truth in that ſaying of his, (*Magna nobis ex hoc indita eſt probitatis neceſſitas, quia omnia ante oculos judicis facimus cuncta cernentis*) A great neceſſity of goodneſs is from hence put into us, becauſe we do all things before the eyes of a Judge, that ſees all things.

Jer. 5. 23. 32.

Boetius de conſol. l. 5.

4. Direction.

2 Tim. 1. 3.

Fourthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you muſt hearken to the voice of Conſcience betimes.*

A man will never begin to be good, till he begins to hearken to what Conſcience ſpeaks: So long as man turns a deaf ear to Conſcience, he is a ſure Priſoner to Satan, and a falſe Enemy to Good. Pſal. 58.4. Joh. 3.20, 21.

Ah! how good might many have been, had they but begun betimes to hearken to Conſcience!

Ah! Young men, do not dally with Conſcience, do not play, do not trifle with Conſcience, do not ſtop your ears againſt Conſcience: he that will not in his Youth give Conſcience audience, ſhall at laſt be forced to hear ſuch lectures from Conſcience, as ſhall make his life a very Hell. A ſleepy Conſcience is like a ſleepy Lyon, when he awakes he roars and tears; ſo will Conſcience, *Mark* 9. 22. Conſcience is (*mille teſtes*) a thouſand witneſſes, for or againſt a man; he that hath long turned the deaf ear to Conſcience, ſhall at laſt Such ſhall find Conſcience to be *Judex*, *Index*, *Vindex*.

find his Conscience like *Prometheus*'s *vulture*, that lies ever a gnawing. *Judas* found it so, and *Spira* found it so, and *Blaer* a great Counsellor of *Scotland* found it so.

Jo. Wolf lect. mem. To. 2. ad An. 1547.

I have read of one *John Hofmeister*, that fell sick in his Inn, as he was travelling towards *Auspurge* in *Germany*, and grew to that horrour of Conscience, that they were fain to bind him in his bed with Chains, where he cryed out, that he was for ever cast off by God, and that the promises that were set before him would do him no good, and all because he had wounded his Conscience, and turned a deaf ear to Conscience.

Well, Young Men, if you will not betimes hearken to Conscience, you shall at last hear Conscience saying to you, as the probationer Disciple said to Christ, Mat. 8. 19. *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; So saith Conscience; Sinner, I have called upon

on thee many a thouſand times, and told thee, that I muſt by commiſſion, be thy beſt friend, or thy worſt enemy, but thou wouldeſt not hear; and therefore, now I will follow thee whither ever thou goeſt; faſt, and I will follow thee, and fill thee with horrours, and terrours; feaſt, and I will follow thee, and ſhew thee ſuch a Hand-writing upon the Wall, as ſhall cauſe thy countenance to change, thy thoughts to be troubled, the joints of thy loins to be looſed, and thy knees to daſh one againſt another; ſtay at home, and I will follow thee from bed to board; go abroad, and I will follow thee into all places and companies, and thou ſhalt know that it is an evil and a bitter thing, that thou haſt ſo often and ſo long neglected my calls, and diſobeyed my voice, and walked contrary to me; now thou ſhalt find a truth in that ſaying of *Luther* (*una gutluta malæ conſcientiæ totum mare*, &c.) one drop of an evil Conſcience

Dan. 5. 5, 6. *Tolle conſcientiam, tolle omnia*; Take away conſcience, and take away all, ſaith the Heathen.

ſwallows up the whole Sea of worldly joy.

Well Young men, there is a day a coming, wherein a good Conſcience will be better than a good Purſe, for then the Judge will not be put off with a ſuit of complements, or fair words, not drawn aſide with hope of reward; and therefore as you would be able to hold up your heads in that day, make Conſcience of hearkning to the voice of Conſcience in this your day.

5. Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you muſt know betimes wherein true happineſs lies.*

Quot homines tot ſententiæ, ſo many men, ſo many minds.

For a man will never begin to be good, till he begins to underſtand wherein his happineſs conſiſts.

The Philoſophers ſpeaking of happineſs, were divided into two hundred eighty eight opinions, every one intending ſomething, and yet reſolving nothing. Therefore

the man in *Plutarch*, hearing them wrangle about mans (*ſummum bonum*) chiefeſt good, one placing it in this, and another in that; he went to the Market, and bought up all that was good, hoping among all he ſhould not miſs of it, but he did. Many look for happineſs in ſin, others look for it in the Creatures, but they muſt all ſay, it is not in us (*Nil dat quod non habet*) nothing can give what it hath not; if the Conduit pipe hath no water, it can give no water; if a man hath no mony, he can give no money; if the creatures have no happineſs, they can give no happineſs; Now this Jewel, this Pearl, happineſs, is not to be found in the breaſt, in the boſom of Creatures. In a word, becauſe I muſt haſten to a cloſe, mans happineſs lies,

Iſa. 56.12. Job 28.14.

Firſt, In his Communion with God, as Experience and Scripture demonſtrates. Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe (but give me that word again) yea, happy is that people, whoſe God is the

Pſa. 144.1

Lord. A man whoſe ſoul is in *communion* with God, ſhall find more pleaſure in a *deſart*, in a *dungeon*, in a den, yea in *death*, than in the *Palace* of a *Prince*, than in all *worldly* delights and contents, &c.

Pſal. 32. 1, 2. Secondly, in pardon of ſin, *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered. Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* It is not, bleſſed is the honourable man, but bleſſed is the pardon'd man; It is not, bleſſed is the rich man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; It is not, bleſſed is the learned man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; It is not, bleſſed is the politick man; but bleſſed is the pardoned man; It is not, bleſſed is the victorious man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man. Do with me what thou wilt, ſince thou haſt pardoned my ſins, ſaith *Luther*.

Thirdly, In a compleat fruition and enjoyment of God, when we ſhall be here no more: *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee*

ſee God. Now they ſee him but darkly, but in heaven they ſhall ſee him face to face, they ſhall know as they are known. But of theſe things I have ſpoken largely elſewhere, and therefore ſhall ſatisfie my ſelf with theſe hints. Mat. 5.8. 1 Cor. 13. 12.

6. Direction.

Laſtly, *If you would be good betimes, then you muſt break your covenant with ſin betimes.*

You muſt fall out with your *luſts* betimes; you muſt arm and fence your ſelves againſt ſin betimes; a man never begins to fall in with Chriſt, till he begins to fall out with his ſins; till ſin and the ſoul be two, Chriſt and the ſoul cannot be one: *Now to work your hearts to this, you ſhould always look upon ſin under theſe Notions.* Iſa. 28.15, 18.

1. Notion.

Firſt, *If you would have the league diſſolved betwixt ſin and your ſouls betimes, then look upon ſin under the notion of an enemy betimes.*

Dearly

1 Pet. 2. 11. Sins especially against knowledge are (*peccata vulnerantia, & devastantia*) wounding and wasting.

Dearly Beloved, I beseech you, as Strangers and Pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. As the Viper is killed by her young ones in her belly, so are poor sinners betrayed and killed by their own lusts, that are nourished in their bosoms.

Pittacus, a Philosopher, challenging *Phylon* the *Athenian* Captain (in their wars against them) to single Combat, carried a Net privily, and so caught him, and overcame him; So doth sin with poor sinners. The dangerous, pernicious, malignant nature of sin, you may see in the story of the *Italian*, who first made his Enemy deny God, and then stabbed him to the heart, and so at once murthered both body and soul. Sin betrays us into the hand of the Devil, as *Dalilah* did *Sampson* into the hands of the *Philistines*.

Sugared Poisons go down pleasantly; Oh! but when they are down

down they gall and gnaw, and gripe the very heart-ſtrings aſunder; it is ſo with ſin: Ah! poor ſouls, have not you often found it ſo?

When *Phocas* the Murtherer thought to ſecure himſelf by building high walls, he heard a Voice from Heaven, telling him, that though he built his Bulwarks never ſo high, yet the Sin within would ſoon undermine all.

S. *Ambroſe* reports of one *Theotimus*, that having a *diſeaſe* upon his body, the Phyſician told him, that except he did abſtain from intemperance, *drunkenneſs* and *uncleanneſs*, he would loſe his eyes: his heart was ſo deſperately ſet upon his ſins, that he cries out, then (*vale lumen amicum*) farewel ſweet light.

Ah! how did his luſts war both againſt body and ſoul!

The Old Man is like a Treacherous friend, and a friendly Traitor; though it be a harder thing

thing to fight with a mans lusts, than it is to fight with the Cross, yet you must fight or die, if you are not the death of your sins, they will prove the death of your souls.

As one of the Dukes of *Venice* died fighting against the *Nauſatines* with his weapons in his hand.

The Oracle told the *Cyrrheans* (*noctesque dieſque bella gerendum*) they could not be happy, unless they waged War night and day; no more can we, except we live and die fighting against our lusts.

Ah! Young Men, Can you look upon sin under the Notion of an Enemy, and not break with it, and not arm against it?

Well, remember this, the pleasure and sweetness that follows victory over sin, is a thousand times beyond that seeming sweetness that is in sin; and as victory over sin is the sweetest victory, so it is the greatest victory; there is no conquest to that which is gotten over a mans own corruptions, *He that is slow to anger, is better*

than

than the Mighty, and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than he that taketh a City.

It is noble to overcome an enemy without, but it is more noble to overcome an enemy within; it is honourable to overcome fiery flames, but it is far more honourable to overcome fiery luſts.

When *Valentinian* the Emperor was upon his dying bed, among all his victories only one comforted him, and that was victory over his worſt enemy, (*viz.*) his own naughty heart. Rom. 7. 22, 23. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5, 6. Gal. 5. 17.

Ah! Young men, young men, your worſt Enemies are within you, and all their plots, deſigns, and aſſaults are upon your ſouls, your moſt noble part, they know if that Fort Royal be won, all is their own and you are undone, and ſhall be their ſlaves for ever; and therefore it ſtands you upon, to arm your ſelves againſt theſe inbred enemies; and if you ingage Chriſt in the quarrel, you will carry the day, and when

when you shall lye upon your dying beds, you will then find that there is no comfort to that, which ariseth from the conquests of your own hearts, your own lusts.

2. Notion.

2 Pet. 3. 6. Gal. 3. 10. Joh. 8. 34.

Secondly, *If you would break Covenant with sin, if you would arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then look upon sin as the Souls Bonds.*

For as bonds tie things together, so doth sin tie the sinner and the curse together, it binds the sinner and wrath together, it links the sinner and Hell together. I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Inquity is a chain, a bond; now, bonds and chains gall the body, and so doth sin the soul; and as poor Captives are held fast in their chains, so are sinners in their sins, they cannot redeem themselves by price, nor by poor.

2 Tim. 2. *ult.*

Ah! Young men, young men, no-

no bondage to Soul-bondage, no ſlavery to Soul-ſlavery; the *Iſraelites* bondage under *Pharaoh*, and the Chriſtians bondage under the *Turks*, is but the bondage of the body, of the baſer and ignobler part of man; but yours is Soul-bondage, Soul-ſlavery, which is the ſaddeſt and greateſt of all.

S. *Auguſtine* ſaith of *Rome*, that ſhe was the great Miſtreſs of the World and the great drudge of Sin.

Ah friends! you ſhould never look upon your *ſins*, but you ſhould look upon them as your *bonds*, yea, as the worſt bonds that ever were; all other chains are golden chains, chains of Pearl, compared to thoſe chains of Iron and Braſs, thoſe chains of luſts, with which you are bound. Ah! who can thus look upon his chains, his ſins, and not loath them, and not labour for Freedom from them? *Juſtinius* the Emperours Motto was, (*Libertas res inæſtimabilis*) Liberty is unvaluable; if Civil Liberty be, ſurely Spiritual Liberty is much more; if you ask ſouls that were once in a ſtate of bondage, but are

are now Christs free-men, they will tell you so.

Chrysost. Hom. 19. in prior. Epist. ad Corinth.

It was a good observation of St. *Chrysostom*, that *Joseph* was the free-man, and his Mistress was the servant, when she was at the beck of her own lusts, when she tempted, and he refused. Such as live most above sin and temptation, are the greatest free-men; others that live under the power of their lusts, are but slaves, and in bonds, though they dream and talk of freedom, *Tit.* 3. 3.

Jude 23. *Arpazontes* signifies a violent snatching, as the tender hearted Mother to save the life of her child, pulls it hastily, and with violence out of the fire.

3. Notion.

Thirdly, *If you would break league with sin, and arm and fence your selves against it, then look always upon sin under the notion of fire.*

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Oh! snatch them out of their sins, as you would snatch a child, a friend out of the fire! Or as the Angel snatched *Lot* out of *Sodom*, hastily, and with a holy violence: natural fire may burn the house, the goods,

goods, the treasure, the servant, the child, the wife, the body; but this fire burns the soul, it destroys and consumes that noble part, which is more worth than all the treasures of a thousand worlds; every man hath a hand, and a heart to quench that fire that burns in his Neighbours house, but few men have either hands or hearts to quench the fire that burns their Nighbours souls: this is, and this shall be for a Lamentation.

I have read of one, who upon the violence of any temptation to sin, would lay his hand upon burning coals, and being not able to abide it, would say to himself, Oh! how unable shall I be to endure the pains of hell? And this restrained him from evil: but what is the fire of hell, to the fire of sin? Now to provoke you to look upon sin under the notion of fire, consider with me, the sundry resemblances between material and immaterial fire, between corporeal common fire, and between this

Dr. *Venisons* threefold resolution, part. 2. sect. 2.

this Spiritual Fire, *Sin*. As

First, Fire is terrible and dreadful; a Ship on fire, an house on fire, Oh how dreadful is it! so sin set home upon the Conscience, is exceeding terrible and dreadfull. *Mine iniquity* (so the Hebrew) *is greater than I can bear*: Sin or Iniquity is often put for the punishment of sin, by a Metonymy of the efficient for the effect; for sin is the natural Parent of Punishment. *Mine iniquity*, saith *Cain*, *is so great, and lies so heavy, so terrible and dreadful upon my Conscience, that it cannot be forgiven*: and thus by his diffidence he stabs two at once; the Mercy of God, and his own Soul. So Judas, *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood, and he went and hanged himself.*

Gen. 4.13. *Mentiris Cain*, thou liest, *Cain*, saith one on the Text. Mat. 27.3, 4, 5.

As there is no fighting with a mighty Fire, so there is no bearing up, when God sets home sin upon the Conscience; a man will then chuse strangling, or hanging rather than living under such wounds and lashes of Conscience.

Histo-

Hiſtories abound with inſtances of this Nature; but I muſt haſten to a cloſe.

Secondly, Fire is moſt dangerous and pernicious, when it breaks forth of the Chimny, or of the houſe; ſo it is with ſin. Sin is bad in the eye, worſe in the tongue, worſer in the heart, but worſt of all in the life. Fire, when out of its proper place, may do much hurt in the houſe, but when it flames abroad, then it doth moſt miſchief to others. 2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Job 31. 1. Pro. 4. 23. Eph. 5. 15.

Sin in the heart may undo a man, but ſin in the life may undo others, as well as a mans ſelf. Set a guard upon thy eye, a greater upon thy heart, but the greateſt of all upon thy life.

Salvian relates, how the Heathen did reproach ſome Chriſtians, who by their lewd lives, made the Goſpel of Chriſt to be a reproach, where (ſaid they) is that good Law which they do believe? where are thoſe Rules of *Salvianus de G. l. 4.*

of godlineſs which they do learn; they read the holy Goſpel, and ye are unclean; they hear the Apoſtle Writing, and yet are drunk; they follow Chriſt, and yet diſobey Chriſt; they profeſs a holy Law, and yet do lead impure lives.

But the lives of other Chriſtians have been ſo holy; that the very Heathens obſerving them, have ſaid ſurely, this is a good God, whoſe ſervants are ſo good.

It is brave, when the life of a Chriſtian is a Commentary upon Chriſts Life.

Auguſtine. One ſpeaking of the Scripture ſaith, (*verba vivenda, non legenda*) they are words to be lived and practiſed, not read only.

Plutarch. A Heathen adviſeth us to demean our ſelves ſo circumſpectly, as if our Enemies did always behold us.

Epictetus. And ſaid another, for ſhame, either live as Stoicks, or leave off the name of Stoicks. Sirs, live as Chriſtians, or lay down the name of Chriſtians.

Thirdly, Fire hardens, it makes the weak and limber Clay to become ſtiff and ſtrong for the Potters uſe. So Sin hardens, it hardens the heart againſt the Commands of Gods, the Calls of Chriſt, and the wreſtlings of the Spirit. Jer. 5. 3. ch. 19. *ult.* Iſa. 9. 13.

As you ſee in *Pharaoh*, the *Jews*, and moſt that are under the ſound of the Goſpel.

Ah! How many hath this fire (Sin) hardened in theſe days, by working them to ſlight ſoul-ſoftning means, and by drawing them to entertain hardening thoughts of God, and to fall in with ſoul-hardning company, and ſoul-hardening principles, and ſoul-hardening examples, or hardened and unſenſible ſinners? One long ſince thus complained, that they did (*Patientius ferre Chriſti jacturam, quam ſuam*) more calmly paſs by the injuries done to Chriſt, than thoſe which are done unto themſelves: This Age is full of ſuch hardened unſenſible ſouls. Jer. 2 25. ch. 18. 12.

Fourth-

Fourthly, Fire is a lively active Element; so is Sin.

Gen. 22. Psal. 51. Job 3. Mat. 26. Rom. 1. 15. &c.

Ah! how lively and active was the fire in *Abraham*, *David*, *Job*, St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, and other Saints? though Christ by his death hath given it its mortal wound, yet it lives, and is, and will be active in the deareſt Saints. Though sin and Grace were not born together; neither shall they die together; yet while Believers live in this World, they must live together. There is a History that speaks of a Fig-tree that grew in a stone wall, and all means was used to kill it; they cut off the branches and it grew again, they cut down the body and it grew again, they cut it up by the root and still it lived, and grew, until they pulled down the stone wall; till Death shall pull down our stone walls, sin will live, this fire will burn.

Isidore the Monk was very much out, who vaunted that he had in himself no motion to sin forty years together.

We may say of Sin, as some say of Cats, that they have many lives; kill them, and they will live,

live again, kill them again and they will live again: So kill Sin once, and it will live again; kill it again, and it will live again; *&c.* Sin oftentimes is like that Monſter *Hydra*, cut off one head, and many will riſe up in its room.

Fifthly, Fire is of a penetrating nature, it pierceth and windeth it ſelf into every corner, and chink, and ſo doth ſin wind it ſelf into our thoughts, words, and works, it will wind it ſelf into our underſtandings, to darken them; and into our judgments, to pervert them; and into our wills, to poiſon them; and into our affections, to diſorder them; and into our Conſcience, to corrupt them, and into our carriages to debaſe them. Sin will wind it ſelf into every Duty, and every Mercy, it will wind it ſelf into every one of our enjoyments, and concernments.

Iſa. 1. 5, 6. Rom. 7. 13 17. Sin is (*malum Catholicum*) A Catholick evil. *Quodcunq; in peccato peccatum eſt.* Whatſoever is in ſin, is ſin.

Hannibal, having overcome the *Romans*, put on their armor

on his Souldiers; and so by that policy, they being taken for *Romans* won a City; but what are *Hannibal*'s wiles to sins wiles, or Satans wiles? if you have a mind to be acquainted with their wiles; look over my Treatise, called, *Pretious Remedies against Satans Devices.*

Psal. 21. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 5, 6. Prov. 6. 32. Eccl. 9. 18. Pro. 13. 13. Ch. 20. 29. Ch. 11. 3. Ch. 15. 25. Ch. 21. 7.

Sixthly and lastly, Fire is a devouring, a consuming Element, it turns all Fuel into Ashes, it is a Wolf that eats up all. So sin is a Fire that devours and consumes all, it turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* into ashes, it hath destroyed the *Chaldean*, *Persian*, and *Grecian* Kingdoms, and will at last destroy the *Roman* Kingdom also; this Wolf eat up *Sampson*'s strength, *Absolom*'s beauty, *Achitophel*'s policy, and *Herod*'s glory, *&c.* It hath drowned one world already, and will at last burn another, even this. Oh the hopes, the hearts, the happiness, the joys, the comforts, the souls that this Fire (Sin) hath con-

consumed, and destroyed, *&c.*

Peter Camois a Bishop of *Barry* in *France*, in his draught of Eternity, *Numb.*7.5. tells us, that some devout Personages caused those words of the Propht *Isaiah* to be written in Letters of Gold upon their Chimney-pieces, *Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33.14.

Ah! Young men, young men, I desire that you would always look upon sin under the notion of fire, yea, as such fire as lays the foundation for everlasting fire, for everlasting burnings, and this may work when others will not.

I have read of a grave and chast Matron, who being moved to commit folly with a lewd Ruffian, after some discourse she called for a pan of burning coals, requesting him for her sake to hold his finger in them but an hour; he answered, this is

an unkind requeſt; to whom ſhe replied, that ſeeing he would not do ſo much as to put one finger upon the coals for an hour, ſhe could not yield to do that, for which ſhe ſhould be tormented, both body and ſoul in Hell fire for ever. The Application is eaſie, *&c.*

4. Notion.

Fourthly, *If you would break with ſin betimes, if you would arm againſt ſin in the ſpring and morning of your days, then you ſhould look upon ſin under the notion of a thief.*

2Pet.2.4. Gen. 3. And indeed ſin is the greateſt Thief, the greateſt Robber in the World, it robbed the Angels of all their Glory, it robbed *Adam* of his Paradiſe and Felicity, and it hath robbed all the Sons of *Adam* of five precious Jewels, the leaſt of which was more worth than Heaven and Earth.

1. It hath robbed them of the holy and glorious Image of God, which would have been fairly in-

grave

graven upon them, had *Adam* ſtood, *&c.*

2. It hath robbed them of their Sonſhip, and of Sons hath made them Slaves.

3. It hath robbed them of their friendſhip, and made them enemies.

4. It hath robbed them of their communion and fellowſhip with Father, Son, and Spirit, and made them ſtrangers and aliens.

5. It hath robbed them of their glory, and made them vile and miſerable. It hath robbed many a Nation of the Goſpel, and many a Pariſh of many a happy Guide, and many a Chriſtian of the favour of God, the Joys of the Spirit, and the peace of Conſcience.

Well did one of the Fathers call pride and vain-glory, the ſweet ſpoiler of ſpiritual excellencies, and pleaſant Thief.

Oh! the Health, the Wealth, the Honour, the Friends, the Relations that Sin hath robbed thouſands of.

Nay, It hath robbed many of their Gifts, their Arts, their Parts, their Memory, their Judgments;

yea, their very reason, as you may see in *Pharaoh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Herod*, and those Babylonish Princes that accused *Daniel*.

And so in *Menippus* of *Phœnicia*, who having lost his goods, strangled himself. And so *Dinarchus Phidon*, at a certain loss cut his own throat to save the charge of a Cord. And so *Augustus Cæsar* (in whose time Christ was born) was so troubled and astonished at the relation of an overthrow from *Varus*, that for certian months together, he let the hair of his head and beard grow still, and wore it long; yea, and other-whiles would run his head against the doors, crying out, *Quintilius Varus* deliver up my legions again; by all which it is most apparent, that sin is the greatest Thief in all the world.

Suetonius.

Oh! Then who would not break League and Covenant with it, and be still in pressing of God to do justice upon it, *&c.*

5. No-

5. Notion.

Fifthly, *If you would break with ſin, and arm and fence your ſelves againſt ſin betimes, then you muſt look upon ſin under the notion of a burden betimes.* Neh. 1. 1. Hab. 1. 1. Mal. 1. 1.

And indeed, Sin of all burdens is the heavieſt burden in all the world. *Innumerable evils have compaſſed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me.* Pſal. 40. 12 And again *Mine iniquities are gone over my head* (ſaith the ſame perſon) *as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me to bear.* Pſal. 38. 4. Heb. 12. 1 Sin is a weight that eaſily beſets poor ſouls, it is a burden that ſo troubles them, and puzzles them, that ſo curbs them, and girds them, that ſo preſſes and oppreſſes them, as that it wrings many bitter tears from their eyes, and many ſad and grievous ſighs and groans from their hearts. Rom. 7. 13. *ult.*

Again, As Sin is a burden to

Chriſtian; ſo it is a burden to Heaven, it made Heaven weary to bear the Angels that fell; no ſooner had they ſinned but Heaven groans to be eaſed of them, and it never left groaning till Juſtice had turned them a groaning to Hell.

Jude 6.

Again, As ſin is a burden to Heaven, ſo ſin is a burden to the Earth; witneſs her ſwallowing up *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their Wives, Children, Goods, Servants, *&c.* Ah ſinners! your ſins make the very Earth to groan; they make the Earth weary of bearing you. Oh! how doth the Earth groan and long to ſwallow up thoſe Earthly wretches, whoſe hopes, whoſe hearts are buried in the Earth; theſe ſhall have little of Heaven, but enough of Earth when they come to die.

Numb. 16. 16, 35.

Cornelius à Lapide, tells a ſtory, that he heard of a famous Preacher, who ſhewing the bondage of the Creature, brings in the Creatures

Rom. 8. 19. 20, 21, 22, 23.

tures complaining thus, Oh! that we could ſerve ſuch as are Godly! Oh! that our ſubſtance and our fleſh might be incorporated into godly people, that ſo we might riſe into glory with them; Oh! that our fleſh might not be incorporated into the fleſh of ſinners; for if it be, we ſhall go to Hell, & would any Creature go to Hell? Oh! we are weary of bearing ſinners, we are weary of ſerving of ſinners; thus the Creatures groan, thus the Creatures complain, the ſinners ſins forcing them to it, *&c.*

Again, Sin is a burden to God. *Behold I am preſſed under you, as a Cart is preſſed that is full of ſheaves.* By this plain, pithy, country-compariſon, God ſhews how ſadly he is preſſed and oppreſſed; how ſorely he is wearied and tired with thoſe peoples ſins. Divine patience is even worn out; Juſtice hath lift up her hand, and will bear with them no longer. God ſeems to groan under the preſſure of their Amos 2. 1.

sins, as a Cart seems to do under a heavy load; of this God complains by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquites.* I am as weary of your sins, as a travelling woman is weary of her pains, saith God. Sin was such a burden to God, that he sweeps it off with a sweeping flood, *Gen.* 7. *&c.*

Isa. 43.24.

Luke 22. 44. A strange watering of a Garden *Bern.* 1Pet. 2.24.

Again, Sin is a burden to Christ, it made him sweat, as never man sweat; it made him sweat great drops of clotted or congeal'd blood. Sin put Christs whole body into a bloody sweat, it made him groan piteously, when he bare our sins in his body on the Tree. Sin made his soul heavy even to the death; and had he not been one that was mighty, yea, that was Almighty, he had fainted and failed under his burden. And thus you see what a burden sin is to man, to the Creatures, to Heaven, to Earth, to God, to Christ, and therefore

Isa. 9. 6.

as

as you would break with ſin betimes, look always upon it as a burden, yea, as the greateſt and heavieſt burden in all the World, *&c.*

6. Notion.

Sixthly and laſtly, *If you would break Covenant with ſin, and arm, and fence your ſelves againſt it betimes, then you muſt look upon it betimes under the notion of a Tyrant.*

And indeed, ſin is the worſt and greateſt Tyrant in the world. Other Tyrants can but Tyrannize over our bodies, but Sin is a Tyrant that tyrannizes over both body and ſoul, as you may ſee in the ſixth, and ſeventh of the *Romans*. Sin is a Tyrant that hath a kind of juriſdiction in moſt mens hearts, it ſets up the Law of Pride, the Law of Paſſion, the Law of Oppreſſion, the Law of Formality, the Law of Hypocriſie, the Law of Carnality, the Law of Self-love, the Tit. 3. 3.

the Law of carnal Reason, the Law of Unbelief, and strictly commands Subjection to them, and proclaims Fire and Sword to all that stand out; this Saints and Sinners, Good Men and Bad, do sufficiently experience.

Thales, one of the seven Sages, used to say, that few Tyrants lived to be old, but it is far otherwise with this Tyrant Sin.

Sin is a Tyrant, of many thousand years standing, and though it hath had many a wound and many a foil, and recieved much opposition, yet still it playes the Tyrant all the World over. Oh! the hearts that this Tyrant makes to ake, the souls that this Tyrant makes to bleed.

Prov. 4. 16.

Pharaoh's Tyranny was nothing to sins Tyranny, this Tyrant will not so much as suffer his slaves to sleep, they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall. The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

Isa. 57. 20. 21.

Other Tyrants have been brought

brought down, and brought under by a humane power, but this cannot but by a Divine; the power of man hath brought down many of the Tyrants of this world, but it is only the power of Christ that can bring down this Tyrant, that can cast down his strong holds, 2 *Cor.* 10. 3, 4, 5, 6, *&c.* therefore engage Christ in the conflict, draw him into the battle, and in the end the conquest will be yours.

Vitellius, who had been Emperour of all the World, yet was driven thorow the streets of *Rome* stark naked, and thrown into the River *Tyber*, *&c.*

Andronicus the Emperour, for his cruelty towards his people, was by them at last shamefully deposed, and after many contumelies, hanged up by the heels.

Ptolomy was put on a Cross, *Bajazet* in an Iron Cage, *Phocas* broken on the Wheel, *Lycaon* cast to the Dogs (as well as *Jezabel*) *Attalus* thrust into a Forge, King *Gath* into a beer-barrel, *&c.* But none of

of these that have tamed these Tyrants, that have brought down these mighty *Nimrods*, have been able to tame, to bring under the Tyrants, the sins, the lusts that have been in their own bosoms; many a man hath had a hand in bringing down of worldly Tyrants; who notwithstanding have died for ever from the hand of a Tyrant within, *&c.*

CHAP. VIII.

AND thus much for the Directions that young men must follow, if they would be good betimes, if they would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their days. I shall now give some brief Answers to the young mans Objections, and the old mans Scruples, and so close up this Discourse.

Object. 1.

But some young men may object and say, you would have us to be good betimes,

times, and to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the Primroſe of our days, but it may be time enough hereafter to follow this counſel; we are young, and it may be time enough for us to mind theſe things hereafter, when we have ſatisfied the fleſh ſo and ſo; or when we have got enough of the world, and laid up ſomething that will ſtand us inſtead, and that may oyl our joynts when we are old. Now,

To this Objection I anſwer,

Firſt, That it is the greateſt folly and madneſs in the world, to put off God and the great things of eternity with may-bees; what Trades-man, what Merchant, what Mariner, ſo mad, ſo fooliſh, ſo blockiſh, as to put off a preſent ſeaſon, a preſent opportunity of profit and advantage, upon the account of a may-be? It may be I may have as good a ſeaſon, it may be I ſhall have as golden an opportunity to get and to inrich my ſelf as this is; and therefore farewel to this. No men that are in their right minds will argue

argue thus; and why then ſhould you, eſpecially in the things that are of an everlaſting concernment to you?

I have read of one *Monarcho*, a Frantick *Italian*, who thought that all the Kings of the Earth were his vaſſals; and as Frantick are they who wilfully neglect preſent ſeaſons of Grace, upon the account of a future may-be, &c.

Secondly, I anſwer, it may be if thou neglecteſt this preſent ſeaſon and opportunity of grace, thou mayeſt never have another; it may be mercy may never knock more if thou doſt not now open, it may be Chriſt ſhall never be offered to thee more, if now thou doſt not cloſe with him, and accept of him; it may be the Spirit will never ſtrive more with thee, if now thou doſt reſiſt him, and withſtand him; it may be a pardon ſhall never be offered to thee more, if now thou wilt not take it; it may be the Goſpel ſhall never ſound more in thy ears, if now

Young men, if you will but go into burial places, you ſhall find graves exactly of your length.

now thou wilt not hear it: now ſet one may-be againſt another may-be, ſet Gods may-be againſt thine own may-be. But,

Thirdly, Doubtleſs there are many thouſand thouſands now in Hell, who have pleaſed themſelves, and put off God and the ſeaſons of Grace with a may-be, hereafter may be time enough; It may be when I have gratified ſuch a luſt, and when I have treaſured ſo much of the World, I will return, and ſeek, and ſerve the Lord; but before ever this ſeaſon or opportunity come, Juſtice hath cut the thread of their lives, and they are now miſerable for ever; and now they are ſtill a curſing themſelves, becauſe they have ſlipt their golden opportunities upon the account of a may-be, *&c.*

It was an unſpeakable vexation to King *Lyſimachus*, that his ſtaying to drink one draught of water, loſt him his Kingdom.

Fourthly and laſtly, This putting off of God, and the preſent ſeaſons of Grace with a may be, is very provoking to God, as you may ſee, if you will but read from

from the twentieth verſe to the three and thirtieth of the firſt of *Proverbs*. Nothing ſtirs and provokes a Maſter more than his Servants putting off his ſervice or his commands with a may-be, it may be I will, it may be I may do this and that; nothing puts a Maſter ſooner into a heat, a flame, than this; nor nothing puts God more into a flame than this, as you may ſee by comparing *Pſal.* 95. *ver.* 6. to the end, with that third of the *Hebrews*, and the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. read the words, and tremble at the thoughts, of a may-be, at the thoughts of putting off of God, and the ſeaſons of grace.

I have read of two, who cut off their right hands one for another, and then made it an excuſe, a put off they were lame, and ſo could not ſerve in the Galleys of *Francis* the firſt, King of *France*, but this practice of theirs did ſo incenſe and provoke the King, that he ſent them both to the Gallows.

I ſuppoſe the Reader is not ſo young, but knows how to apply it.

Object. 2.

If I ſhould begin to be good betimes, and to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of my days, I ſhould loſe my friends, I ſhould loſe their favour, for they are carnal and worldly, and had rather I ſhould ſeek after Gold, than God, the Creature, than Chriſt, Earth, than Heaven, &c.

Now to this I anſwer, Surely you are out; for,

Firſt, This is the high way, the readieſt way to gain the beſt, the ſureſt, and the ſoundeſt friends; *When a mans ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* When a man falls in with God, God will work the creatures to fall in with him: *Joſeph* found it ſo, and *Jacob* found it ſo, and *Job* found it ſo, the three Children found it ſo, and *Daniel* found it

Prov. 16. 7. Job 5. 23. to 28.

it ſo, as you all know that have but read one Scripture, and many in this age (as bad as it is) have found that the beſt way to make friends, is firſt, to make God our Friend. Ah! young men, young men, you ſhall not loſe your friends (by ſeeking and ſerving the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days) but only exchange bad ones for good ones, the worſt for the beſt; he that gives up himſelf betimes to the Lord ſhall have God for his friend, and Chriſt for his friend, and the Angels for his friends, and the Saints for his friends; Chriſt will be to ſuch

Luk 15. 7. Iſa. 10. 6, 7, 8, 9. Heb. 4. 14. Iſa. 59. 16, 17. ch. 44. 24. Mal. 3. 6. Pſal. 121. 4, 5.

Firſt, *An Omnipotent Friend.*
Secondly, *An Omniſcient friend.*
Thirdly, *An Omnipreſent friend.*
Fourthly, *An Indeficient friend.*
Fifthly, *An Independent friend.*
Sixthly, *An Immutable friend.*
Seventhly, *A Watchful friend.*
Eighthly, *A Loving friend.*
Ninthly, *a Faithful friend.*
Tenthly, *A Compaſſionate friend.*
Eleventhly, *A Cloſe friend.*

There

There is a friend that ſticketh cloſer than a Brother, Prov. 18. 24. Such a friend is Chriſt, and ſuch a friend is as ones own ſoul, and a rare happineſs, hardly to be match'd. 1 Joh. 4. 16. Tit. 1. 2. Iſa. 63. 9.

Twelfthly, *An univerſal friend*, a friend in all caſes, and a friend in all places, Chriſt is ſo a friend to every one of his, as if he were a friend to none beſides: Hence it is that they ſay, not only, our Lord, our God, but my Lord and my God; Chriſt is ſuch an univerſal friend, as that he ſupplies the place, and acts the part of every friend. Luke 1.43 Joh.20.28 Phil. 4.19.

Thirteenthly, *He is our beſt friend*, Pſal. 90. 1. before we had a friend in all the world, he was our friend, *Prov.* 8. 21. Joh.13.1.

Laſtly, *He is a conſtant friend; Whom he loves, he loves to the end.*

Auguſtus Cæſar would not ſuddenly entertain a League of friendſhip with any, but was a conſtant friend to thoſe he loved (*amare nec cito deſiſto, nec temere incipio*) late ere I love, as long ere I leave; Where *Alexander* the Great cannot cut that knot of friendſhip that is tyed betwixt Chriſt and his.

Where Chriſt begins to love, he always loves, *Jer.*31.3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love*: Now who would not venture the loſs of all friends in the world, to gain ſuch a friend as this is?

Ah! Young men and women, let me ſay to you, what *Seneca* ſaid to his friend *Polybius* (*Fas tibi non eſt de fortuna conqueri, ſalvo Cæſare*) never complain of thy hard fortune, as long as *Cæſar* is thy friend; ſo ſay I, never complain of your loſs of friends, ſo long as by loſing of them, you gain Chriſt to be your friend.

Secondly, Thou wert better be without their friendſhip and favour than to enjoy it upon any ſinful and unworthy accounts, thou wert better run the hazared of loſing thy friends, and their favour, by ſeeking and ſerving the Lord in the Primroſe of thy days, than to run the hazard of loſing God, Chriſt, Heaven, eternity, and thy ſoul for ever, by neglecting the things of thy peace. It was a gallant return which the noble

Mat.16.26
Mat. 8 46.

noble *Sutilius* made his friend, requesting of him an unlawful favour, in such language as this, I had as good be without such a friend, as with him, who will not let me speed in what I ask; to whom he replied, I can want such a friend as you, if for your sake I must do that that is not honest. The Application is easie.

Well, young men, remember this, The torments of a thousand Hells, were there so many, comes far short of this one voice, to be turned out of Gods presence with a (*Non novi vos*) I know you not. Mat. 7.23.

Ah! Young man, young man, thou wert better ten thousand thousand times to be cast out of the thoughts and hearts of thy carnal friends and relations, than to be cast out of Gods presence with cursed *Cain* for ever, than to be excommunicated out of the general Assembly of the Saints, and Congregation of the first-born, which are written in Heaven: and therefore away with this objection. But Gen. 4. Heb. 12.23

Third-

Thirdly, The favour and friendship of such carnal persons, is very fickle and inconstant, it is very fading and withering. Now they stroke, and anon they strike; now they lift up, and anon they cast down; now they smile, and anon they frown; now they kiss, and anon they kill; now they cry *Hosanna*, *Hosanna*, and anon they cry, crucifie him, crucifie him. *Haman* is one day feasted with the King, and the next day made a feast for Crows; the Princes of *Babylon* were highly in King *Darius* his favour one day, and cast into the Lyons Den the next; the Scribes and Pharisees that cried up *Judas* one day, did in effect, bid him go and hang himself the next day.

Esth. 7.

Dan. 6. Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5. *Valerian*, *Valens*, *Belisarius*, *Bajazet*, *Pythias*, *Dionysius*, *Pompey*, *William* the Conquerour, and many others have found it so.

Such mens favours and friendship are as *Venice* Glasses, quickly broken, and therefore not much to be prised or minded. Histories abound with instances of this nature; but I must hasten, only remembring this, that every days experience tells us, that wicked men ca

can soon turn Tables, and cross their *Books*; their favour and friendship is usually like to a morning cloud, or like to *Jonahs* Gourd, one hour flourishing, and the next hour withering; and why then shouldest thou set thy heart upon that which is more changeable than the Moon? But,

Glaucus who changed his Armour of Gold with *Diomede*, for his Armor of Brass, stands upon record for a Fool.

Fourthly and lastly, Who but a mad man would adventure the loss of the Kings *favour*, to gain the *favour* of his Page? who but a stark *Bedlam* would run the hazzard of losing the Judges favour upon the Bench, to purchase the good-will of the Prisoner at the Bar?

Psal. 4.6,7.

Socrates preferred the Kings Countenance before his Coin; and so must you prefer the favour of *God*, the countenance of *Christ*, and the things of eternity, above all the favour and friendship of all the men in the *World*: when your nearest friends, and dearest relations stand in competition with Christ, or the things above, you must shake them off; you must turn your

Psal. 45.10 Mat. 10.30 Luke 14. 26, 27.

backs upon them, and welcome Christ, and the things of your peace; he that forsakes all relations for Christ, shall certainly find all relations in Christ, he will be father, friend, husband, child; he will be every thing to thee, who takest him for thy great All.

Object. 3.

I, but I shall meet with many reproaches from one and another, if I should labour to be good betimes, if I should seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of my youth.

Now to this I answer.

First, What are reproaches to the great things that others have suffered for Christ, his Gospel, and the maintaining of a good Conscience? what is a prick of a pin to a stab at the Heart? what is a chiding to a hanging, a whipping to a burning? no more are all the reproaches thou canst meet with to the great things that others have suffered for Christs sake.

Hebrews, ch. 10. 11. Read the ten Persecutions.

Ah! young men, you should be like the *Scythian* that went naked in

in the Snow, and when *Alexander* wondred how he could endure it, answered, *I am not ashamed, for I am all forehead.*

So should you, in the cause and way of Christ, you should not be asham'd, you should be all forehead, you should be stout and bold.

Colonus the Dutch Martyr, under all his reproaches, called to the Judge that had sentenced him to death, and desired him to lay his hand upon his heart, and then asked him, whose heart did most beat, his or the Judges. All the reproaches in the world should not so much as make a Christians heart beat, they should not in the least trouble him, nor disturb him; But,

Secondly, I answer, that all the reproaches thou meetest with in the way of Christ, and for the sake of Christ, they do but add pearls to thy Crown, they are all additions to thy happiness and blessedness. If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory, and of God rest- 1 Pet. 4. 14.

eth upon you: on their part, he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part, he is glorified; the more you are reproach'd for Chriſts ſake on earth, the greater ſhall be your reward in Heaven; they that are moſt loaded with reproaches here, ſhall be moſt loaded with glory hereafter. Chriſt hath written their names in golden letters in his book of Life, that are written in black letters of reproach for his ſake on Earth. 'Twas a good ſaying of one, *A reproacher* (ſaith he) *is beneath a man, but the reproached, that bear it well, are equal to Angels:* of all Crowns the Reproached mans Crown, will weigh heavieſt in Heaven. But,

Mat. 5.11, 12.

Chryſoſt.

So was *Joſeph*, *Mephiboſheth*, *Naboth*: and in latter times *Luther*, who they ſaid died deſpairing when be was alive to co nfute it. And that *Beza* ran away with another mans Wife. And that *Calvin* was branded on the ſhoulder for a Rogue; but there would be no end of theſe, if I ſhould ſay all that might be ſaid.

Thirdly, I anſwer, the beſt men have been moſt reproached, *David* was, *Pſal.* 69. 7. *Pſal.* 89. 50. *Pſal.* 119. 22. *Pſal.* 31. 11. *Pſal.* 109. 25. And *Job* was, *Job* 19. 35.

ch. 20. 3. *Job* 16.10. And *Jeremiah* was, *Jer.* 20.7,10. yea, this hath been the common *portion* of the people of God in all Ages of the World, in *Nehemiahs* time it was so, *Neh.* 1. 3. *And they said unto me, the remnant that are left of the captivity, are in great affliction & reproach.* In *Davids* time it was so, *Psal.* 79. 4. and *Psal.* 44. 13, 14. and in *Jeremiahs* time it was so, *Lam.* 5. 1. *Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider and behold our reproach.* And in *Daniels* time it was so, *Dan.* 9. 16. *Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.* And it was so in the Apostles time, *Rom.* 3. 8. *And not rather as we be slanderously reported,* as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just. 2 *Cor.* 6. 8. *By honour and dishonour; by evil report, and good report, as deceivers, and yet true:* so in that, 1 Tim. 4. 10. *For therefore we both labour and suffer Reproach, because we trust in the living God,* &c. And it was so in the Primitive

times, for when the Chriſtians met together before Sun to pray, the Heathens reported of them, that they worſhipped the Sun, and aſpired after Monarchy, and committed adulteries, and unnatural uncleanneſſes. Now who is troubled, who complains of that which is a common lot, as cold, winter, ſickneſs, death, *&c.* No more ſhould any complain of reproaches, it being the common lot of the people of God in all ages; yea, Chriſt himſelf was ſadly reproached, falſly accuſed, and ſtrangely traduced, diſgraced, and ſcandalized; he was called a Glutton, a Drunkard, a friend of Publicans and ſinners, and judged to uſe the Black Art, caſting out Devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils; Chriſt hath ſuffered the greateſt, and the worſt reproaches, why then ſhould you be afraid to wear that Crown of Thorns that Chriſt hath wore before you? There is a great truth in what he ſaid, (*Non poteſt qui pati timet, ejus eſſe qui paſſus eſt*) he that

Mat. 9. 34. ch. 12. 24.

Tertul. de fuga in perſecut.

that is afraid to suffer, cannot be his Disciple, who suffered so much; if the Master had been marked with a black coal, let not the servant think to go free. I am heartily angry (saith *Luther*) with those that speak of my sufferings, which if compared with that which Christ suffered for me, are not once to be mentioned in the same day; But,

Fourthly, I answer, that all reproachers shall at last be arraigned at the highest Bar of Justice, for all the reproaches that they have cast upon the people of God.

They think it strange, (or they think it a new world) that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

1 Pet. 4. 4. ξενιζονται βλασφημουντες. Wonder and blaspheme.

I am in an ecstasie, (saith *Picus Mirandula*) to think how prophane men rail upon those now, whom one day they will wish they had *imitated*. It was excellent *Counsel* that the Heathen Orator gave

cic. 4. in Verr.

his Hearers (*Ita vivamus ut rationem nobis reddendam arbtiremur*) let us live, as those that must give an account of all at last.

S. *Chrysostom* brings in Christ comforting his Disciples against *Reproaches*, speaking thus unto them; *What is the wrong grievous to you, That now they call you Seducers and Conjurers? it will not be long before they shall openly call you the Saviours and blessings of the whole world: that time that shall declare all things that are now hid, shall rebuke them for their lying words against you, and shall kindle the splendour of your vertue; So they shall be found lyers, evil speakers, false accusers of others; but you shall be more clear and illustrious than the Sun, and you shall have all men witnesses of your Glory.* Such as wisely and humbly bear reproaches now, shall judge reproachers at last. But,

Isa. 3.17. Mic. 7.9, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 6. 3, 4.

Fifthly, I answer, That God doth many times, even in this life, bear sad witness and testimony against the reproachers of his people; *I will bless*

bleſs them that bleſs thee, and I will curſe them that curſe thee; God will even in this life curſe them with a witneſs, who curſe them that he bleſſeth. *Pharaoh* found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Jezabel* found it ſo, and *Haman* found it ſo, and the Princes of *Babylon* found it ſo, and the *Jews* find it ſo to this very day.

Gen. 12.3. 2Sam.10. 11,12,13. Divine Juſtice is like *Vulcans* Iron Net, that took the Gods, it apprehends and condemns all that are reproachers and enemies to his people.

And Oh! the dreadful judgements and curſes that God hath poured out upon the Reproachers of his Name, of his Son, of his Spirit, of his Word, of his Ordinances, and of his People, in theſe days wherein we live. I might give you many ſad *inſtances* of ſuch in our days, whoſe feet juſtice hath taken in the ſnare, men of abſtracted conceits, and ſublime ſpeculations, and indeed ſuch uſually prove the great wiſe Fools, who like the Lark, ſoaring higher and higher, peering, and peering till at length they fall into the Net of the Fowler; and no wonder, for ſuch perſons uſually are as

censorious as they are curious.

Sixthly, I answer, S. *Paul* rejoyced more in his *suffering* reproaches for Christs sake, than he did in his being wrapt up in the third Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong.* And therefore you have him often singing this Song, *I Paul a Prisoner of Jesus Christ:* not I *Paul* wrapp'd up into the third Heaven: He look'd upon all his sufferings, as Gods love-tokens, he look'd upon all *reproaches*, as pledges and badges of Sonship; and therefore joys and glories under all. Christ shewed his love to him, in wrapping him up in the third Heaven, and he shewed his love to *Christ*, in his joyful bearing of *reproaches* for his sake. S. *Paul* rattles his Chain (which he bears for the Gospel) and was proud of it, as a Woman of her Ornaments, saith *Chrysostom.*

(*Crudelitas vestra gloria nostra*) your cruelty is our glory, said they in *Tertull.* Fire, sword, prison, famine, are all delightful to me, saith *Basil.*

Now why should that be matter of

of trouble and discouragement to you, that was matter of joy and rejoycing to him? shall he look upon reproaches as a Crown of Honour, and will you look upon reproaches as a Crown of Thorns?

Oh! look upon reproach, as a Royal Diadem, look upon it as Christs Livery, and count it your highest ambition in the world, to wear this Livery for his sake, who once wore a Crown of Thorns for your sakes. When *Babylas* was to die, he required this favour, to have his Chains buried with him, as the Ensigns of his Honour; But,

Seventhly, I answer, That by a wise and gracious behaviour, under the reproaches thou meetest with for *Christ's* sake, thou mayest be instrumental to win others to *Christ*.

It was a notable saying of *Luther*, (*Ecclesia totum mundum converit sanguine & oratione*) the Church converteth the whole World by Blood and Prayer.

Divers have been won to Christ, by beholding the *gracious carriages* of

Suffering are the ensigns of heavenly Nobility, saith *Calvin*. It was an observation of Mr. *John Lindsey*, that the very smoak of Mr. *Hamilton*, converted as many as it blew upon.

of Christians under their sufferings and reproaches for Christ.

We read of *Cicilia*, a poor Virgin, who by her gracious behaviour under all her sufferings and reproaches for Christ, was the means of converting four hundred to Christ.

Adrianus beholding the gracious chearful carriages of the Martyrs, under all their sufferings and reproches, was converted to Christ, and afterwards suffered Martyrdom for Christ.

See also the history of the Council of *Trent*. 418. 2. Edit.

Justin Martyr was also converted, by observing the holy and chearful behaviour of the Saints, under all their sufferings and reproaches for Christ. During the Cruel Persecutions of the Heathen Emperours, the Christian Faith was spread thorow all places of the Empire, because the oftner they were mown down, (saith *Tertullian*) the more they grew.

And St. *Augustin* observed, that though there were many thousands

sands put to death for professing Christ; yet they were never the fewer for being slain.

Ah! Young men, you may by a wise and gracious bearing of reproaches for Christ, be instrumental to win others to Christ; and therefore never plead there is a Lion in the way. But I must hasten: and therefore in the Eighth and

Last place, consider how bravely several of the very Heathens have born reproaches, and let that provoke you in the face of all *Reproaches*, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth, *&c.*

When *Demosthenes* was reproached by one, I will not, saith he, strive with thee in this kind of fight, in which he that is overcome is the better man.

When one came and reproached *Xenophon* (says he) *You have learned how to reproach, and I have learned how to bear reproach.*

And *Aristippus* (the Philosopher) said, *You are fit to cast reproaches, and I am fit to bear reproaches.*

De-

Demochares, an *Athenian* Orator, was ſent to King *Philip* as Embaſſadour. *Philip* asked him how he might pleaſure the *Athenians*; forſooth, ſaith he, *If you will hang your ſelf:* The Prince patiently ſent him home again, and bid him ask whether were more noble, the patient hearer, or venturer of ſuch unſeemly language.

When one wondred at the patience of *Socrates*, towards one who reviled and reproached him; if we ſhould meet one, ſaith he, whoſe body were more unſound than ours, ſhould we be angry with him, & not rather pity him? why then ſhould we not do the like to him, whoſe ſoul is more diſeaſed than others?

Auguſtus Cæſar (in whoſe time Chriſt was born) bid *Catullus* the railing Poet to Supper, to ſhew that he had forgiven him.

It is a notable example that we find of one *Pericles*, who as he was ſitting with others in a great meeting, a foul-mouthed Fellow bitterly

Plutarch in vita Peric.

bitterly reproached him, and railed all the day long upon him, and at night when it was dark, and the meeting up, the Fellow followed him, and railed at him, even to his door, and he took no notice of him, but when he came at home, this is all he said, *Friend, it is dark, I pray let my Man light you home.*

Themistocles professed that if two ways were shewed him, one to Hell, and the other to the Bar, he would chuse that which went to Hell, and forsake the other.

Josephus, reports of that *Herod* that is made mention of in *Acts* 12. 13. that when one *Simon* a Lawyer had grievously reproached and scandaliz'd him before the people, he sent for him, and caused him to sit down next to him, and in a kind manner he spoke thus to him; *Tell me, I pray thee, what thing thou seest fault worthy, or contrary to the Law in me? Simon*, not having anything to answer, besought him to pardon him, which the King did, and was friends with him, and dismissed him, and bestowed gifts on him.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathen make nothing

thing of reproaches, ſhall they bear up ſo prudently and bravely under the greateſt loads of reproaches, and will not you? will not you, who in your Light, in your Mercies, and in all Goſpel Engagements, are ſo highly advanced above them? Oh that none of them may be called to the Bar in the great day, to witneſs againſt any of you, into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall! and ſo much by way of anſwer to the third Objection. But,

Object. 4.

Fourthly, The young man objects and ſays, *You preſs us to be good betimes, and to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of our days; but we obſerve that moſt men mind not theſe things, but rather give liberty to themſelves, to walk in ways that are moſt pleaſing to the fleſh, and why then ſhould we be ſingular and nice, we were better do as the moſt do, &c.* Now to this I anſwer.

1. That though bad examples are dan-

dangerous to all, yet usually they prove most dangerous and pernicious to young persons, who are more easily drawn to follow *Examples* than *Precepts*, especially those Examples that tend most to undo them, 2 *Kin.* 15.9. It is said of *Zechariah* the King of *Israel*, *That he did evil in the sight of the Lord as his Fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam*, he would be as his Father was, and do as his Father did, whatever came on it.

Præcepta docent, exempla movent, Precepts may instruct, but examples do perswade.

So the *Samaritans*, of whom it is said, 2 *King.* 17.41. *These Nations feared the Lord* (that is, they made some kind of profession of the true Religion, as the Ten Tibes had done) *and served their Graven Images*, (too) *both their Children, and their childrens children* (did thus) *as did their Fathers, so do they unto this day*: By evil examples they were both drawn to Idolatry, and rooted and confirmed in it; so the main reason why the Kingdom and Church of *Judah* were so setled in their Idolatry, that there was

no hope of reclaiming them, was this, that their Children remembred their Altars and their Groves by the green trees upon the high Hills, *Jer.* 16. 1, 2. Tinder is not apter to take fire, nor wax the impreſſion of the ſeal, nor paper the ink, than youth is to follow ill examples.

You may ſee in *Radbod* King of *Phryſia*, who coming to the Font to be baptized, asked what was become of his Anceſtors, anſwer was made, that they died in a fearful ſtate unbaptized; he replied, that he would rather periſh with the multitude, than go to Heaven with a few.

I remember the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickedneſſes of the Gods, ſaid, *What! do they ſo! and ſhall I ſtick at it? No, I will not.* Sinful examples are very drawing, and very encouraging, many have found it ſo to their eternal undoing; thoſe that have no ears to hear what you ſay, have many eyes to

Æthiopians lame themſelves if their King be lame, ſaith *Diodorus*. *Elian* reports, that there was a Whore that did boaſt, that

to see what you do. Bad Princes make bad Subjects; bad Masters make bad Servants; bad Parents make bad Children, and bad husbands make bad Wives; it is easier for the bad to corrupt the good, than for the good to convert the bad, it is easier to run down the hill with company, than to run up the hill alone.

I would desire all young men often to remember that saying of *Lactantius* (*Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*) he who imitates the bad, cannot be good. Young men, in these professing times, stand between good and bad examples, as *Hercules* in his dream, stood between Vertue and Vice, solicited by both; chuse you must who to follow: Oh! that you were all so wise, as to follow the best; as a woman who hath many suiters, is very careful to take the best: so should you; Life, heaven, happiness, Eternity hangs upon it.

But before I come to the second answer, let me leave this note, or no-

she could easily get Scholars away from *Socrates*; but *Socrates* could get away no Scholars from her.

Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue worser in the Heart, but worst of all in the life, and that because it then indangers other mens souls, as well as a mans own.

notion, with those who make no Conscience of undoing others by their Examples, (*viz.*)

That a more grievous punishment is reserved for them who cause others to offend, than for them which sin by their Occasion or Example.

Thus the Serpent was punished more than *Eve*, and *Eve* more than *Adam*.

So *Jezabel* felt a greater and sorer Judgment than *Ahab*. To sin (saith one) hath not so much perdition in it, as to cause others to sin. Friends, you have sins enough of your own, to make you for ever miserable, why should you by giving bad examples to others, make your selves more miserable? the lowest, the darkest, the hottest place in Hell will be for them that have *drawn others* thither by their Example. *Dives* knew, that if his Brethren were damned, he should be double damned, because he had largely contributed to the bringing of them to Hell by his wicked example; and therefore he de-

Mat. 23. 15

Luk. 16. 28

desires that they might be kept out of Hell, (not out of any love, or good will to them) but because their coming thither would have made his Hell more hot, his Torments more insufferable; But,

Secondly, I answered, *If you sin with others, you shall suffer with others.* If you will partake of other mens sins, you shall also partake of other mens plagues. They that have been (like *Simeon* and *Levi*) brethren in iniquity, they shall be brethren in misery; they that have sinned together impenitently, shall be sent to Hell joyntly, they shall perish together *eternally.* If you will needs be companions with others in their sins, you shall be sure to be companions with them in their sorrows. The old world sin'd together, and are drowned together; the *Sodomites* burning in lusts together, were burnt with fire and brimstone together; *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, they sin together, they murmur and provoke the Lord together, and the earth opens her

Rev. 18.4 *Non minus ardebit, qui cum multis ardebit, Aug.* He burns no less, that burns with company.

Gen. 6. Gen. 19.

Numb. 16. 26,—34.

her mouth, and ſwallows them up together. *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt purſue *Iſrael* together, and they are drown'd in the Sea together. *Zimri* and *Cosbi* committed folly, uncleanneſs together, and *Phineas* ſtabs them both together. The Hebrew Doctors have a very pretty parable to this purpoſe; A man planted an *Orchard*, and going from home, was careful to leave ſuch Watchmen as might both keep it from ſtrangers, and not deceive him themſelves; therefore he appointed one blind, but ſtrong of his limbs, and the other ſeeing, but a Cripple. Theſe two in their Maſters abſence conſpired together; and the blind took the lame on his ſhoulders, and ſo gather'd the fruit; their Maſter returning, and finding out their ſubtilty, puniſhed them both together.

Exod. 14.

Numb. 25.

So will Juſtice deal with you at laſt, who ſin with others; therefore take heed, young men, of doing as others do; But,

Thirdly, I anſwer, *You muſt not live*

live by examples, but by precepts; you are not to look so much at what others do, as at what God requires you to do, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.* Rom. 12. 2. *Fashion not your selves like unto this world*; that is, do not fashion and conform your selves to the corrupt customs and courses of wretched worldlings, who have made Gold their God, and gain their glory; the running cross to a divine command, cost the young Prophet his life (though he did it under pretence of revelation from God) as you may see in that sad story, 1 *King.* 13. *ch. &c.* (*Non parentum, aut majorum authoritas, sed Dei docentis imperium*) the command of God must out-weigh all authority and example of men.

Obedientia non discutit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosp.

Hieron.

And we must be as careful in the keeping of a light Commandment, as an heavy *Commandment*, saith a *Rabbi*: Divine commands must be obeyed against all contrary

ry reaſonings, wranglings and examples. St. *Auguſtine* brings in ſome excuſing their compliance with the ſinful cuſtomes and examples of thoſe times, in drinking healths, thus, Great Perſonages urged it, and it was at the Kings Banquet, where they judged of Loyalty by Luxury, and put us upon this Election, Drink or die, the not drinking of a health, had been our death; he gives this anſwer, that God who ſees that for love to him, and his Commands, thou wouldeſt not conform to their drunken cuſtoms, will give thee favour in their eyes, who thus threatned thee to drink.

The complaint is ancient in *Seneca*, that commonly live not *ad rationem*, but *ad ſimilitudinem*. *Seneca de vita beata*, *c.* 1.

Ah! Young men, you that doat ſo much upon examples now, will find that a ſtinging, terrifying queſtion, when put home by God, or Conſcience, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* Iſa. 1. 12. But,

Fourthly, I Anſwer, *Company and Allurements to ſin will be found no ſufficient excuſe for ſin.*

Gen. 3.

If *Eve* lay her fault on the Ser-

pent

bent, and *Adam* lay his on *Eve*, God will take it off, and lay the curſe on both. *Saul's* Provocation by his people (and by *Samuels* long ſtay) to offer Sacrifice, would not bear him out, but for his diſobedience, he muſt loſe both his Crown and Life. The young man in the *Proverbs*, though tempted and ſollicited by the Harlot, yet he hath a Dart ſtruck thorow his heart; though *Jonah* did pleaſe Gods gracious inclinations to ſhew mercy, and his fear of being diſproved; yea, and though he might have pleaded his fear of cruel and ſavage uſage from the *Ninevites* (whoſe hearts were deſperately ſet upon wickedneſs) and his deſpair of ever doing good upon a people ſo blinded and hardened; and that they were *Gentiles*, and he a *Jew*; and why ſhould he then be ſent with ſo ſtrange, ſo terrible a meſſage to ſuch a people, nothing being more hateful and diſtaſteful to a Jewiſh palate: but all theſe pleas and excuſes will not

1 Sam. 15. 14, 15, 26, 27.

Pro. 7. 14, 15, 21.

Oculos quos peccatum claudit, pœna aperit, Greg. the eyes that ſin ſhuts, affliction opens, and *Jonah* found it ſo.

bear off the blow; *Jonah* muſt into the Sea for all this, yea, he muſt to the bottom of Hell, as himſelf phraſes it. It is in vain for the bird to complain, that it ſaw the corn, but not the Pit-fall, or for a fiſh to plead it ſaw the bait, but not the hook. So it will be in vain, for ſinners at laſt when they are taken in an infernal Pit-fall, to plead Company and Allurements by which they heve been enticed to undo their ſouls for ever.

Dionyſius the *Sicilian* King, to excuſe himſelf from the preſent delivery of the golden Garment he took from his God *Apollo*, anſwered, that ſuch a Robe as that was, could not be at any ſeaſon of the year uſeful to his God, for it would not keep him warm in the winter, and it was too heavy for the Summer, and ſo put off his Idol god; but the *God of ſpirits, the God of all fleſh*, will not be put off with any *excuſes* or *pretences*, when he ſhall try, and judge the children of men: But,

Fifthly, and laſtly, I anſwer, *That*

it is a very great judgement to be given up to follow evil examples: a man given up to evil examples, is a man ſadly left of God, wofully blinded by Satan, and deſperately hardened in ſin; it ſpeaks a man ripe for wrath, for Ruine, for Hell, *Jer.* 6.11. * *Behold, I will lay ſtumbling blocks before this people, & the Fathers and the Sons together, ſhall fall upon them; the neighbour & his friend ſhall periſh.* Oh! it is a dreadful thing when God ſhall make the ſinful examples of others to be ſtumbling blocks to a people, at which they ſhall ſtumble and fall, and periſh for ever; good had it bin for ſuch perſons that they hath never been born; as Chriſt once ſpake concerning *Judas.*

The *Rhodians* & *Lydians* enacted ſeveral *Laws*, that thoſe Sons which followed not their Fathers in their Vertues, but followed vicious examples, ſhould be diſinherited and their Lands given to the moſt vertuous of that race, not admitting any impious Heir whatſoever to inherit; and do you think that God

* This particle behold is ſometimes a note of deriſion, Gen. 3.22. 2. A note of attention often, Iſa. 28.6. Mal. 1.1. Luk. 1.20. 3. A note of admiration often. 4. A note of aſſeveration. 5. A note of caſtigation; in all the ſences we may take it here. *Warr.*

will not disinherit all those of heaven and happiness, who follow vicious Examples? Dubtless he will, 1 *Cor.* 10. 11, 12.

Object. 5.

The Fifth and last Objection (I shall mention) is this, *God is a God of mercy, in him are bowels of mercy, yea, a Sea, an Ocean of mercy, he loves mercy, he delights in mercy, and he is ready to shew mercy to poor sinners, when they are even at the last cast, when there is but a short stride between them and the Grave, between them & Eternity, as we see in his extending mercy to the Thief, and in his giving a pardon into his hand, and the assurance of Paradise into his bosom, when he was ready to be turned off the ladder of life, & therefore I may spend the Primrose of my days in following sin & the delights, profits, vanities, & contents of this world, & at last cast, I may have mercy as well as the Thief. God is a God made up of mercy, and surely he will not deny some crums of mercy to poor sinners in misery,* &c.

Now to this Objection, I shall give

give these following Answers.

First, *God is as just as he is merciful*, witness his casting the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradise; witness all the Threatnings, the Curses, the Woes that the Bible is filled with, from one end to the other; witness the Hell, the Horror, the Terror, & Amazement that he raiseth in the Consciences of sinners; witness the devastations that he hath made of the most stately flourishing Towns, Cities, Countrys, and Kingdoms, that have been in all the World, witness the variety of diseases, calamities, miseries, dangers, deaths, always attending the inhabitants of the world; but above all, witness Christs treading the Wine-press of his Fathers Wrath, witness his hiding his face from him, and the pouring out of all his displeasure and vengeance on him.

God is as well all hand to punish, as he is all grace to pardon.

Zeleucus the *Locrensian* Law-giver, thrust out one of his own Sons eyes, for his transgressing of a wholsom Law which he had enacted;

ed; but God the Father thrust out both Christs eyes for our transgressing of his Royal Law; Oh! the justice and severity of God. But,

Secondly, I answer, That there is not a greater evidence of blindness, prophaneness, hard-heartedness, spiritual madness, and hellish desperateness in all the world, than to make that an Argument, an incouragement to sin (*viz.* the mercy of God) which should be the greatest argument under heaven to keep a man from sin, as all know that have but read the Scripture: neither are there any sinners in the world, that God delights to rain Hell out of Heaven upon, as upon such, who by their abuse of mercy, turn the God of mercy into a God of clouts, and go on out-daring Justice it self, *Deut.* 24. 19, 20. *And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless him in his heart, saying, I shall have peace (God is a God of mercy) though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:*

Read Isa. 22. 12. to 16. and Ezek. 14. 10. 15.

The

The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this Book, ſhall lie upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under heaven. In theſe words you may obſerve, that God is abſolute in threatning, to ſhew that he will be reſolute in puniſhing, *Pſal.* 11. 5, 6. *The wicked, and him that loveth iniquity doth his ſoul hate. Upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, fire, & brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; this ſhall be the portion of their cup.*

A lover of iniquity, is a liver in iniquity upon choice.

Ah! That all poor ſinners would make theſe two Scriptures their companions, their conſtant bedfellows, till they are got above that ſad temptation of turning the mercy of God into an incouragement to ſin.

Whilſt *Milo Crotoniates* was tearing aſunder the ſtock of an Oak, his ſtrength failing him, the cleft ſuddenly cloſing, he was held ſo faſt by the hands, that he became a prey to the Beaſts of the Field:

All the abuſers of mercy, will certainly and ſuddenly become a prey to the Juſtice of God, that will rend and tear them in pieces, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 50. 22. *Wo, wo to the ſoul that fights againſt God with his own mercies*, that will be bad, becauſe he is good; that will be ſinful, becauſe he is merciful; that will turn all the kindneſſes of God (that ſhould be as ſo many ſilver Cords to tie him to Love and Obedience) into Arrows, and ſo ſhoot them back into the heart of God. Abuſed Mercy will at laſt turn into a Lion, a fierce Lion, and then wo to the abuſers and deſpiſers of it. But,

Exemplum latronis ſervati eſt admirandum, non ad imitandum.

Thirdly, In anſwer to that part of the Objection, concerning the Thief on the Croſs, I offer theſe things briefly to your thoughts.

1. *That as one was ſaved to teach ſinners not to deſpair, ſo another was damned, to teach them not to preſume.*

A pardon is ſometimes given to one upon the Gallows, but who ſo truſts to that, the Rope may be his hire.

hire. It is not good (saith one) to put it upon the Psalm of *miserere*; and the neck verse; for sometimes he proves no Clerk, and so hangs for it.

2. It is an example without a Promise. Here is an Example of late Repentance; but where is there a Promise of late Repentance?

Oh! let not his late and sudden conversion, be to thee a temptation, till thou hast found a Promise for late and sudden Conversion; it is not Examples, but Promises that are Foundations for Faith to rest on; he that walks by an Example of Mercy, without a Precept to guide him, and a Promise to support him, walks but by a dark lanthorn that will deceive him; well, young man, remember this, Examples of Mercy encrease wrath, when the heart is not bettered by them. But,

3. This was a rare Miracle of mercy, with the glory whereof Christ did honour the ignominy of his Cross; and therefore we may as well look for another Cru-

cifying of Christ, as look for a sinners conversion, when he hath scarce time enough to reckon up all those particular duties which make up the integrity of its constitution. But,

4. I answer: This Thief knew not Christ before, he had not refused, neglected, or sleighted Christ before; the Sermon on the Cross was the first Sermon that ever he heard Christ preach, and Christs prayer on the Cross was the first prayer that ever he heard Christ make, he knew not Christ till he met with him on the Cross (which proved to him a happy meeting) his case was as if a *Turk* or *Heathen* should now be converted to the Faith; and therefore thou hast little reason, Oh young man, to plead this example to keep Christ and thy soul asunder, who art every day under the call, the intreaties and wooings of Christ. But,

5. And lastly, I answer; The circumstances of time and place are righly to be considered. Now when Christ was triumphing on the Cross

over

over *Sin*, *Satan*, and the *World*; when he had made the Devils a publick ſpectacle of ſcorn and deriſion, when he was taking his leave of the world, and entring into his Glory; Now he puts a pardon into the thiefs hand, and crouds other favours and kindneſſes upon him.

As in the *Roman* Triumphs, the *Victor* being aſcended up to the Capitol in a Chariot of State, uſed to caſt certain pieces of coyn among the people, for them to pick up, which he uſed not to do at other times: So our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the day of his Triumph, and ſolemn inauguration into his heavenly Kingdom, ſcatters ſome Heavenly Jewels, that this Thief might pick up, which he doth not, nor will not do every day: or as in theſe days it is uſual with Princes to ſave ſome notorious malefactors at their Coronation, when they enter upon their Kingdoms in Triumph, which they do not uſe to do afterwards; So did Jeſus Chriſt carry it towards this Thief, but this is not his

his ordinary way of saving and bringing souls to Glory; and therefore do not, O young man, let not the Thiefs late conversion prove a temptation, or an occasion of thy delaying repentance, and trifling away the Primrose of thy days in vanity and folly. And thus much may suffice to have been spoken by way of answer to the Young mans Objection. I shall now speak a few words to Old men, and so close up. Now

CHAP. IX.

IS it so commendable, so desirable, and so necessary for young men to be good betimes, to seek & serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of their Youth, as hath been sufficiently demonstrated in this Treatise? Oh then that I could so woo aged persons, as to win them (who yet have put off this great work) to seek and serve the Lord before their glass be out, their Sun set, and their Souls lost for ever.

Oh that that counsel of the Prophet

phet might take hold upon your hearts. *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your foot stumble* (through age) *upon the dark Mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.*

I, but aged sinners may reply; *Is there any hope, any help for us?* is there any probability, is there any possibility that ever such as we are should return, and find mercy and favour with the Lord? we who have lived so long without him, we that have sinned so much against him, we that to this day are strangers to him, yea, in arms against him; is there any hope that we white-headed sinners, who have withstood so many thousand offers of Grace, and so many thousand motions of the Spirit, and so many thousand checks of conscience, and so many thousand tenders of Christ and Heaven, that ever we should obtain Mercy, that ever we should have our old hearts turned, our millions

lions of ſins pardoned, our vile natures changed, and our poor ſouls ſaved?

I anſwer, that there is hope even for ſuch as you are; all the Angels in heaven and all the men on earth, cannot tell, but that you, even you, may obtain mercy and favour, that your ſouls die not; with the Lord nothing is impoſſible, and for the grace of the Goſpel nothing is too hard: Now this I make evident by an induction of particulars. Thus,

Mat. 20.1. to 17. The *Roman* Penny was ſeven pence half-penny.

1. All were not called nor ſent to work in the Vineyard at the firſt hour, ſome ever called at the third hour, others at the ſixth, others at the ninth, and ſome at the eleventh; God hath his ſeveral times of calling ſouls to himſelf: the eleventh hour was about five in the afternoon, an hour before Sun-ſet, when it was even time to leave work; and yet at this hour ſome were called, imployed, and rewarded with the reſt.

Some of the Fathers, by the ſeveral hours mentioned in this Parable,

rable, do understand the several Ages of Man, *viz.* child-hood, youth, middle-age, and old-age, wherein poor souls are called and converted to Christ; the scope of the Parable, is to signifie the free grace of God, in the calling of some in the spring and morning of their days, and in the calling of others in their old age, and in the evening of their days. But,

Gen. 12.4. Joh. 3.1,2, 3,4.ch.7. 50.

2. *Abraham* in the old Testament, and *Nicodemus* in the New, were called and converted in their old age, when there were but few steps, between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity.

I have read of one *Cajus Nearius Victorius*, who was an Old Man three hundred years after the Apostles time, and had been a Pagan all his days, and in his old age he enquired and harkened after Christ, and said he would be a Christian. *Simplicianus* hearing him say so, would not believe him, but when the Church saw a work of Grace indeed upon him, there was shouting

ſhouting and dancing for gladneſs, and Pſalms were ſung in every Church, *Cajus Nearius Victorius* is become a Chriſtian; And this was written for a wonder, that he in his old age, and in his gray-hairs, ſhould become a gracious Chriſtian.

Aretius alſo ſpeaks of a certain man in his time, it is no feigned ſtory, ſaith he, for I ſaw the man with my own eyes, he was one that had been a moſt vile and deſperate ſinner, a drunkard, a ſwearer, a wanton, a gameſter, and ſo he continued to his gray hairs; but at laſt it pleaſed God to ſet his ſins in order before him, and the man was ſo troubled in Conſcience, that he threw himſelf down unto the ground, calling upon Satan to take him away, provoking Satan to take him away; *Devil, take thine own, Devil, take thine own; I am thine own, take thine own*; whereupon (ſaith *Aretius*) prayer was made for him, Chriſtians prayed, they faſted and prayed, they

prayed

prayed night and day; and it pleased God at last, that this poor aged sinner revived, converted to God, lived a godly life afterwards, and died comfortably.

Therefore let not the gray-headed sinner despair, though his Spring be past, his Summer overpast, and be arrived at the Fall of the leaf.

3. Divine Promises shall be made good to returning Souls, to repenting souls, to believing souls, be they young or old, 2 *Chr.* 23. 9. *The Lord your God is gracious & merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return unto him.* Joel 2. 13. *And rent your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.* Isa. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*, or he will multiply to pardon.

Isa. 1. 18. Jer. 3. 12. Isa. 43. 22. to 26. ch. 57. 17, 18. Jer. 51. 5. Joh. 3. 16. Mat 16. 16.

pardon. More of this you may ſee by reading of the Scriptures in the Margent: all ſorts of ſin ſhall be pardoned to all ſorts of believing and repenting ſinners.

The *New Jeruſalem* hath twelve Gates, to ſhew that there is every way acceſs for all ſorts and ranks of ſinners, to come to Chriſt. He was born in an Inn, to ſhew that he receives all comers, Young and Old, Poor and Rich, *&c.* But,

4. The Lord hath declared by oath a greater delight in the converſion and ſalvation of poor ſinners (whether they are young or old) than in the deſtruction and damnation of ſuch, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live:* Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die? O ye houſe of *Iſrael*! Two things make a thing more credible.

1. The quality or dignity of the perſon ſpeaking.

2. The

2. The manner of the speech: now here you have the great God, not only speaking, promising, but solemnly swearing that he had rather poor sinners should live than die, be happy than miserable; therefore despair not, O aged sinner, but return unto the Lord, and thou shalt be happy for ever. But,

5. There is vertue enough in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, to wash and cleanse away all sin; not only to cleanse away the young mans sins, but also to cleanse away the old mans sins; not only to cleanse a sinner of twenty years old, but to cleanse a sinner of fifty, sixty, yea, a hundred years old, 1 *Joh.* 1. 17. *The Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*: not simply from sin, but from all sin; there is such a power and efficacie in the blood of Christ, as is sufficient to cleanse all sorts of sinners from all sorts of sins; there is vertue in the blood of the Lamb to wash out all the spots that are in the oldest sinners hearts; and therefore

una guttula plus valet quam cœlum & terra, Luther. One little drop is more worth than Heaven and Earth.

fore let not old ſinners deſpair, let not them ſay, there is no hope, there is no help, as long as this fountaion of the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt is open, for all ſorts of ſinners to waſh in. But,

6. The call and invitations of Chriſt in the Goſpel are general and indefinite, excluding no ſort of ſinners, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock, if any man* (mark the indefiniteneſs of perſonal admittance *hear my voice & open the door, I will come in to him, & ſup with him, and he with me.* Let the ſinner be old or young; a green head, or a gray-head, if he will but open the door, Chriſt will come in, and have communion and fellowſhip with him. So in that *Mat.* 21. 28. turn to theſe Scriptures, and dwell upon them, they all clearly evidence the Call and gracious Invitations of Chriſt to be to all ſinners, to every ſinner; he excepts not a man; no, though never ſo old, nothing ſhall hinder the ſinner, any ſinner, the worſt and moſt aged ſinner from

from obtaining mercy, if he be willing to open to Christ, and to receive him as his Lord and King, *Joh.* 6. 37. But,

7. Christs Pathetical lamentation over all sorts and ranks of sinners, declares his willingness to shew mercy to them; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem* (saith Christ, weeping over it) *that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace*, &c. *O that my people had harkened unto me!* Christ weeps over *Jerusalem*, so did *Titus*, and so did *Mercellus* over *Syracuse*, and so did *Scipio* over *Carthage*, but they shed tears for them, whose blood they were to shed, but Christ weeps over the necks of those young and old sinners, who were to shed his blood. As a tender-heard Father weeps over his rebellious children, when neither smiles nor frowns, neither counsels nor intreaties will win them, or turn them from their evil ways, so doth Jesus Christ over those rebellious Jews upon whom nothing would work. But,

Luke 19. 41, 42. Psal. 81. 13.

Eighthly,

Pſal. 65. 1, 2. Rom. 10. 21.

Joh. 5. 2.

Eightly and laſtly, Though aged ſinners have given Chriſt many thouſand denials, yet he hath not taken them; but after all, and in the face of all denials, he ſtill reinforces his ſuit, and continues to beſeech them by his Spirit, by his Word, by his Wounds, by his Blood, by his Meſſengers, and by his Rebukes, to turn home to him, to embrace him, to believe in him, and to watch with him, that they may be ſaved eternally by him; all which beſpeaks gray-headed ſinners not to deſpair, nor to diſpute, but to repent, return, and believe, that it may go well with them for ever. Conſider ſeriouſly what hath been ſpoken, and the Lord make you wiſe for Eternity.

FINIS.

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